

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Wednesday of the Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

Almsgiving, prayer, and fasting – in this order – are given to us today by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. These are the spiritual weapons the Church recommends to us at the beginning of the Lenten season on Ash Wednesday. Jesus begins with the greatest obstacle to our spiritual life – attachment to money – to help us in our dialogue with God, which is prayer. “You cannot serve both God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24) we will hear later this week, on Saturday, which ties directly into almsgiving. Almsgiving frees us (or shows that we are free) from serving that particular “master”, which is wealth (attachment to money) or property. Regarding prayer, our prayers can be heard by God when we do not think we are better than anyone else or have a judgement against someone. Fasting helps us to atone for our sins (see Leviticus 16:29-31) and is purifying. Perhaps Jesus had the Book of Tobit in mind when he gave us these three practices (see Tobit 12:8-10). St. Paul encourages us to follow Jesus’ ways in these words: “whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” We will never understand these words from today’s Mass until we have experienced this, through God’s grace, of course, which is always ready to assist us!

God Love You!

*Fr. Jim Starasovich*

