



LENT *Faith Conversations*

Week of March 7-13

Sunday Readings: Exodus 20: 1-17, Psalm 19 (Jn. 6:68c), I Corinthians 1: 22-25, John 2: 13-25

ADULT REFLECTION

The full version of this Sunday's First Reading, which names the Ten Commandments, begins with a consideration of the worship of idols. While belief in a Sun god or other nature form may be a thing of the past, human beings will always struggle with forms of idolatry. Anything (even neutral and good things) can lessen or all-together usurp God's rightful place in our lives. Lent is a time for examining our focal points, our guiding forces. Is God first?

In the Gospel, Jesus' love for the Father spills out in righteous anger against the subtle idolatry that has crept into the Temple. Even this holy site meant for worshipping God has been capitalized by profiteering money-changers and others. Jesus, his humanity remarkably revealed, angrily overturns their tables and drives them all away. Elsewhere in Scripture, we are referred to as *Temples* of the Holy Spirit. What does Jesus see and feel upon entering *our* hearts?

Money is an obvious object of idolatry for some people. There are countless other examples. *What has been or is currently something that has more of your heart and attention than God?*

God became human in Jesus. *What does that mean to you? What does his humanity reveal about your own?*

FAMILY CONVERSATION & PRAYER STARTERS

Our lives are full; some things are more important than others. *How can we tell what is important in our lives? Are there things we actually treat with more importance than loving and being loved by God?*

Anger is a strong feeling that can come upon us suddenly. *Is anger wrong? When or how? What does Jesus' example in the Temple teach us about anger and what we do with it?*

The Ten Commandments are God's guardrails for our happiness. *How many of them can we, as a family, name without looking? What does it mean to "keep holy the Sabbath day"? How can we do this better?*

PRAYER

Jesus, you share our humanity. Open our eyes this Lent to see where we tend to push God aside. In flame our hearts with the strength of feeling that will help us rearrange our lives in order to put God first. Amen.

FASTING

What can you take away from your life this week to help put (and keep) God first?

ALMSGIVING

Jesus was angered by injustice. What injustice do you see around you? Choose one action this week that will contribute to making your home, your school/work-place, or community more just.