

Lying to Oneself Fifth Week of Lent Saturday, April 12, 2014 8:15 AM
Ez 37:21-28; **Jn 11:45-56** (The tendency of human beings is to think always the problems are external.)

It is a great temptation in reading John's Gospel to think that the whole drama of Jesus' Passion was a terrible mistake, a miscommunication, a crossing of wires.

Now it was **Passover**. Accordingly, **the Jewish people were celebrating their deliverance by the hand of God**: strong-arm, right hand outstretched, whereby God had saved the Hebrew people, the Israelite people, from the power of Pharaoh. And so at this time they **renewed their identity of who they were as Jews**. They did this by eating a meal called the Seder in which they retold the story.

And they often also did it together up in Jerusalem. And every year, in Jerusalem in particular, **the expectation was: Will the Messiah come this year?** Will the Messiah come and redeem us from the power and the yoke of the Roman Empire the way God redeemed us from the yoke and the power of Egypt? That's the setting.

Jesus is playing his cards close to the chest. No one quite knows what he is going to do. But we know what he did. **He does enter Jerusalem, and he is acclaimed as Messiah**. Of course, what that meant to him and what that meant to the people was very different, and that is why the drama of his Passion ensued. He has come indeed as Messiah, but not to destroy the Romans, because the real problem isn't external. That is **the tendency of human beings to think always the problems are external**. They are economic. They are political. We need new leaders. We need a new system. We need new laws. That's the temptation.

But, no, that is not the problem. **The problem is inside of us**. We need new hearts and new minds. **We need a way of thinking according to the thinking of God**. "My thoughts are not your thoughts," saith the Lord." Well, yes, that's true, but now we need to start thinking the Lord's thoughts and doing the Lord's will, and that and **that alone will bring true freedom. And freedom will actually start to change the world**.

Meanwhile, the world is caught in addictions and as the addiction counselors say, ninety percent of the problem of addictions is really lying. **Addictions are ninety percent about lying to yourself**, only ten percent about alcohol, drugs, sex, or whatever. Ninety percent is lying. And so the problem is the world is still lying to itself. **The Messiah has come. He offers the truth that will make us free**. And the question is: Yes, but who really wants it?