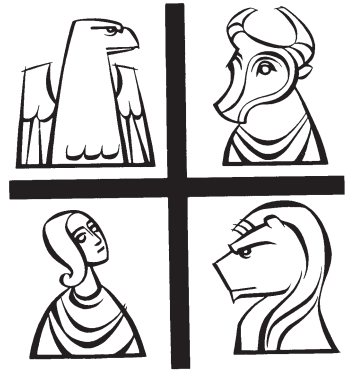


Reading Matthew in Lent



Gospel of Matthew 5: 21–48

Anger

21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old,
‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’

22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment;
whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council;
and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.

23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar
and there remember that your brother has something against you,
24 leave your gift there before the altar and go.

First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court,
lest your accuser hand you over to the judge,
and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.

26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Lust

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’

28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent
has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.

For it is better that you lose one of your members
than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away.

For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

Divorce

31 “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’

32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife,
except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery,
and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths

33 “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old,
‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’

34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,
35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool,
or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

36 And do not take an oath by your head,
for you cannot make one hair white or black.

37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’;
anything more than this comes from evil.

Retaliation

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’
39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil.
But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.
40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.
41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.
42 Give to the one who begs from you,
and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

Love Your Enemies

43 “You have heard that it was said,
‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’
44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.
For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good,
and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?
Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others?
Do not even the Gentiles do the same?
48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Prayer

All-seeing God,
you alone judge rightly our inmost thoughts.

Teach us to observe your law from the heart
even as we keep it outwardly.

Purify our desires,
calm every anger,
and reconcile us to one another.

Then will our worship at your altar render
you perfect praise.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.