



1) Opening prayer

Father of all that is good,
keep us faithful in serving you,
for to serve you is our lasting joy.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

2) Gospel Reading - Luke 19,45-48

Jesus went into the Temple and began driving out those who were busy trading, saying to them, 'According to scripture, my house shall be a house of prayer but you have turned it into a bandits' den.'

He taught in the Temple every day. The chief priests and the scribes, in company with the leading citizens, tried to do away with him, but they could not find a way to carry this out because the whole people hung on his words.

3) Reflection

- Context. Luke after having described the journey of Jesus going up to Jerusalem (11-19, 28) now presents him while he is carrying out his activity in the context of the Temple. After the entrance of the one sent by the Lord into Jerusalem passing through the door on the East (19, 45), the Temple becomes the first place where Jesus carries out his activity: the controversies that are narrated take place in this place and they refer to this. Jesus' going to the Temple is not only a personal fact but also concerns the "multitude of his disciples" (v. 37) on their relationship with God (vv. 31-34). Luke above all, presents a first episode in which are presented the preparations for the entrance of Jesus into the Temple (vv. 29-36) and their realization (vv. 37-40); then follows a scene where we find the passage of today's liturgy: his installation in the Temple and driving out the sellers from the Temple (vv. 45-48).
- The gesture of Jesus. This does not have a political value but a prophetic significance. The reader thinks that the great purpose of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is the entrance into the Temple. To recall the prophecy of Malachi is evident that is fulfilled at the entrance of Jesus into the Temple: "And suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to

his Temple..." (3, 1). The gesture of driving out the sellers from the Temple is accompanied by Jesus with two references to Scripture. Above all, Is 56, 7: "My house will be a house of prayer". The Temple is the place in which Jesus turns back to the Father. The commercial and business activity has made the Temple a den of bandits and has deprived it of its only and exclusive function: the encounter with the presence of God. The second reference from Scripture: is taken from Jeremiah 7, 11: "Do you look on this Temple that bears my name as a den of bandits?" The image of the den of bandits serves Jesus to condemn the material traffic on the one side and not only the dishonest traffic of trade or business that in a hidden and illegal way was carried out in the Temple. Jesus demands a complete change: to purify the Temple from all that human negative things and to bring it back to its original function: to render an authentic service to God. And driving out those impostors of the trade and business the prophecy of Zechariah is fulfilled: «There will be no more traders in the Temple of Yahweh Sabaoth, when that Day comes" (14, 21). These words of Jesus on the Temple are not directed to a restoration of the purity of the cult or worship, as was the intention of the Zelots. The intention of Jesus goes beyond the purity of the cult; it is more radical, intransigent: the Temple is not a work done by human efforts; the presence of God is not bound to its material aspect; the authentic service of God is carried out by Jesus through his teaching. Because of this preaching "the high priests and the Scribes together with the leading citizens tried to do away with him" (v. 47). Within this temporary place of the Temple Jesus carries out a highly significant teaching, in fact, it is precisely in this place that is so fundamental for the Jews that his teaching reaches the summit and it will be from here that the words of the Apostles will begin also (Act 5, 12.20.25.42). The diffusion of the Word of grace of which Jesus is the only bearer extends itself like an arch that begins with his opposition, when he was still only twelve years old in the Temple among the doctors of the Law; it is prolonged with his teaching when going across Galilee and during his journey to Jerusalem; until he entered the Temple where he takes possession of the house of God. The bases for the future mission of the Church are placed in this place: the diffusion of the Word of God. The heads of the people do not intend to suppress Jesus for having ruined the progress of the economic affairs of that time, but the reasons go back to all his previous activity of teaching and now these act in his discourse against the temple. Jesus claims something and this causes the reaction of the high priests and of the Scribes to break out. In contrast with this hostile behaviour one can see the positive one of the people who "are hanging from his words". Jesus is considered as the Messiah who gathers around him with his Word of grace the people of God.

4) Personal questions

- Does your prayer to the Lord consist in a simple relationship of father to son in which to find all the strength to communicate with God, or rather is it accompanied by uses and practices to gain over his goodness?
- When you listen to the Word of Jesus do you feel seized by his teaching like the crowds who hung from his words? Or rather are you sufficiently attentive to listen to the

Gospel and do you adhere to Christ?

5) Concluding Prayer

The Law you have uttered is more precious to me
than all the wealth in the world.

How pleasant your promise to my palate,
sweeter than honey in my mouth! (Ps 119,72.103)