

Homily  
Friday of the 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Lent  
March 24, 2023

I like being in control. I like things a certain way. I work hard to put things the way I like them and even harder to keep them that way. Growing up was a challenge because I was at the mercy of my Mom and my Dad, and even worse, my older sister. I had a difficult time getting things my way because of so many others having things their way. As I got older, I began to have more control, and I exercised it. I kept my room a certain way. My things were organized the way I liked them. Then I got out on my own. Everything was the way I wanted them, and it was a little scary because if I failed, I only had me to rely on. But I learned and I got better at controlling things the way I wanted them.

Then I got married. Now there were two of us wanting things a certain way. And a lot of those things did not agree. It took a long time for me to relinquish control. I realized my wife and I were on the same team. She wanted what was best for the both of us. Still, I struggled with letting go of those things I wanted to control.

Then I opened up more towards God. Here's Someone Who definitely likes things a certain way, but He let me have my way, even though it may not have been His way, or the best way for me. I struggled because I thought I knew what was best for me, the way things should be. To this day, I still struggle to surrender to God fully. That's scary for me because I had to rely on myself most of my life. It has been a life-long process for me to realize that I don't have to do it all on my own.

Both of today's readings burst forth with examples of people relying on themselves, thinking they know what is best for them and, not only ignoring God, but pushing Him out of the way. In the first reading, the wicked plan to destroy the good, they become the enemy of what is right. In today's Gospel, the Jews saw and recognized Jesus, they heard Him and they rejected Him.

God has a plan for us. Yes, He made us in His image and we are free to make our own plans. Yet how often do we make those plans without first considering what God wants. He wants what is best for us because He loves us. He won't lead us astray. And we still ignore His teaching; we ignore His plan for us.

Why am I so stubborn? Why do I not lay all my problems at His feet and ask for His help all the time? Or worse, why do I seek His help then ignore it and do my own thing?

As we approach the end of Lent and move towards Holy Week, I pray we all can recognize our weaknesses and failings, realize God has a plan, embrace it, and just get out of our own way.

Jesus, I trust in You.