

Homily
Friday of the 10th Week in Ordinary Time
June 14, 2024

What are the three elements of mortal sin? Grave matter: the sin must be serious. Full knowledge: the person must know the sin is serious. Deliberate consent: the person decides to embrace the sin anyway.

What if Adam had smacked the fruit out of Eve's hand as she was about to take a bite? She would still be guilty of sin, according to what Jesus is saying in today's Gospel. In fact, the fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel is all about intent, not just our actions, but our intentions before the act. If we look with lust, our intension is to commit adultery, even if only in our mind. Our thoughts make us culpable. If we look and instead see the beauty of God's creation, even if we are tempted, and we choose to avoid the near occasion of sin, we are not guilty.

God is always speaking to us. Are we listening? God is not in the strong and heavy wind, in the crashing of rocks or the earthquake or fire, but in the whisper. Do we listen to God's whisper? How difficult would it be to sin if we are listening to God all the time? We cannot be one with God and at the same time deliberating consent to embrace sin. It is in our humility that we see God, know God and love God. It is in our pride that we look away from God and think we know better.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if, when we think we know better, we would stop, look at God, ask Him what we should do and then listen? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we decided to give God control of our lives, making all our decisions based on what God wants us to do? This is the beginning of humility. This is the end of pride.

But we are weak. We are vulnerable and susceptible to temptation and acting on those temptations. And this is why Jesus came down to earth to be one of us, to take on our sin as restitution for all of us. This is why we come to Mass to be encouraged by His Word and strengthened by His Body and Blood. This is why we stop to think about God, praise Him and give Him thanks, even thanks for the bad things that happen, for the bad things we do. And this is why we ask Him to forgive us, because we love Him and we are truly sorry.

Today, let us listen to God's loving whisper, let us follow the example of Jesus, let us pray to the Holy Spirit to give us the grace, courage and humility to say No to temptation and Yes to God's love.