

## **Truth to Power**

*A Missionary Commentary on the  
Sunday Readings*

## **Sunday Readings**

Exodus 20:1-17, or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17

Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

John 2:13-25

[USCCB link to the Readings](#)

This Sunday, some of our Eucharistic communities will hear the story of Jesus driving out the moneychangers and the merchants from the temple. Those communities celebrating a scrutiny for catechumens will hear the story of the Samaritan Woman. The Jewish authorities that Jesus confronted were not truthful, they knew what they were doing. The Samaritans, who worshipped God on “this mountain” did not understand. And both – the temple in Jerusalem and the mountain in Samaria – are being replaced by worshipping the Father “in Spirit and truth.”

Worship requires truth and truth requires worship. Missionaries dwell among a people and speak truth and invite people to pray with them and welcomes them into our prayer, our worship. We can think of Mother Teresa, St. Teresa of Kolkata, and the truth she proclaimed every day in her care for the poor and dying in the streets – every human being has an innate God-given dignity that no class or caste can erase.

This is the hard truth that Pope Francis speaks to the political leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Israel, and the Palestinians. On Sunday, February 25th, Pope Francis noted the second anniversary of the Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. A war, the Holy Father said, that “is not only devastating the region of Europe but unleashing a global wave of fear and hatred.” He also spoke to the many people torn apart by the war in Israel and Palestine and called on concrete assistance to those who are suffering, especially “the wounded, innocent children.”

Even in our own country, Bishop Mark Seitz, in the Diocese of El Paso, must speak truth to power. Annunciation House has, for 45 years, been a compassionate response to the needs of men, women, and children seeking a better life for themselves and their families and while they try to navigate a complex, and broken, U.S. immigration system. A long-standing partnership between the Church, the local government, and the U.S. Border Patrol is being targeted by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton claiming that the Annunciation House is “engaged in the business of human smuggling.” Bishop Seitz spoke out, “We are now witnessing an escalating campaign of intimidation, fear and dehumanization in the state of Texas.”

A global wave of fear and hatred or Spirit and truth? We must choose Spirit and truth.

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## **Notes on the Sunday Readings**

### **First Reading**

The scripture passage from Exodus where God gives his people the ten commandments; the way they are to live, what they are to do and not do, so that God is, indeed, God and we are his people.

### **Psalm**

God's words, his commandments, become our law, our way of life, and they give everlasting life, refreshes the soul, gives wisdom, enlightenment, and more precious than gold, sweeter than honey.

### **Second Reading**

Saint Paul teaches the Corinthians that Jesus Christ crucified is the power and wisdom of God; a stumbling block for some and foolishness for others.

### **Gospel**

Jesus goes to Jerusalem and enters the temple. There he finds merchants selling oxen, sheep, and doves. There were also money changers. He made a whip out of cords driving them out of the temple, spilling the coins and overturning their tables. "Stop making my Father's house a marketplace," he says. The authorities could not defend the merchants and moneychangers. They had bent, if not broken, the first commandment putting commerce before God. Rather, they demanded a sign from Jesus – which he gives but they cannot see. Zeal for the Father's house and his own body, risen from the dead, as the new and everlasting temple. .

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