

On the mind of the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser

This Lent, I signed up for a few different email devotionals to be delivered to my inbox every day. One of these contains brief videos based on a book, *Difficult Teachings of Jesus* by Matthew Kelly. The author offers snippets of wisdom, full of grace and challenge, that shine light on various aspects of our call to follow Christ. Deny yourself. Love your enemies. Take up your cross. Do not be afraid. Actually, I think all teachings of Jesus would qualify as difficult!

I can't say that watching the videos has been a Lenten discipline for me because I haven't been disciplined at all about even opening the emails on a regular basis. However, I did catch one this week that socked me right in the gut (in a good way). It's about this difficult teaching found in Matthew 7:1 -- "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged."

Understanding what qualifies as judgment in this context can be tricky. "Do not judge" does not mean "Anything goes." There is something to be said for identifying sin and permitting ourselves to make a negative assessment about another person based on experience. This is especially true when it means drawing an appropriate boundary to prevent someone from repeatedly hurting or sinning against us.

Jesus says elsewhere, "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgement." (John 7:24). This is Jesus' response to being *mis*judged by some of those criticizing him. Right judgement accounts for the big picture. It is informed, clear-eyed and discerning. Wrong judgment is superficial, hypocritical, self-righteous, unforgiving, or all of the above.

I find a sure indication of judging others to be when I'm more enraged at someone else's sin than I am embarrassed by my own. Matthew Kelly's observations can also help us detect wrong judgment. Here are some points from his video:

- Judging others is lazy. It's a shortcut. It requires little critical thinking and almost no emotional intelligence.
- Judging others is self-centered. When we judge others, we do not define them. We define ourselves.
- Jesus wants us to go beyond the injustice of this type of judgment to see and experience the whole person. He wants us to access our capacity for empathy, patience and understanding.

We know that Jesus had plenty of harsh things to say that would fall in the category of right judgment. But when it comes to his admonition to judge not, we need only think of Judas. Even *after* Judas had betrayed him, Jesus says to him, "Friend, why have you come?" *Friend*. Jesus offers the hand of friendship to Judas – and to us when we are his betrayers.

May we embrace, and impart, this truth and grace of the Gospel.

Pick up a copy of the Parish Newsletter in the church narthex for information on Holy Week and Easter at Incarnation.

TODAY AFTER CHURCH!

For those interested in a brief tour of the church's art and architecture, please meet one of our volunteer tour guides at the Chapel of the Resurrection near the back of the church.

12:30 to 1:00 p.m. Bring your coffee and grab a seat near the front of the church for a roundtable discussion with the preacher about the sermon. This will be a time when you can ask questions, give feedback, and in general, help us all to deepen the conversation that the sermon has only just begun.

CONFIRMATION AND INQUIRERS' CLASS – Wednesday, March 30

7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Our yearly Confirmation and Inquirers' Class continues in the Parish House (and also on Zoom) with "The Faith: Belief and Action." All are welcome to attend. Email the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser at adannhauser@churchoftheincarnation.org with any questions.

FREEING JESUS BOOK DISCUSSION – Thursday, March 31

7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Our Lenten Book Discussion on *Freeing Jesus* continues in the Parish House (and also on Zoom). The Rev. Dr. Nate Lee will lead this week's discussion on chapter 4, "Jesus as Lord." All are welcome, even if you haven't read the book. Email the Rev. Dr. Nate Lee at nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org with any questions.

SIGN UP FOR THE PARISH EASTER LUNCHEON – Easter Day, April 17

The Easter Luncheon will be held in a private room at Slattery's Midtown Pub on East 36th Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues. The buffet menu includes Chicken Marsala, Baked Ziti, Beef Tips in a Burgundy Sauce, sides and dessert. Cost is \$35 for adults and \$25 for children. There is also a cash bar. To make a reservation, contact Thomas Reefer, Parish Administrator, at 212-689-6350 ext. 2 or treefer@churchoftheincarnation.org.

LENTEN DRIVE FOR BABY SUPPLIES

Throughout Lent, we are collecting baby supplies — diapers, formula, food, wipes, etc. — for Hour Children, an organization that helps incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their children successfully rejoin their communities. Pick up a flyer in the Narthex and scan the QR code to access Incarnation's Hour Children Amazon storefront. Purchase from the list of needed supplies online or drop off baby supplies at the church.

EVERY WEEK AT INCARNATION

Sunday Bible Study: Bible Study is held in the Parish House (and via Zoom) on Sundays from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. We generally follow the Yale Bible Study program, which offers course materials on select books of the Bible, deepened by insights from Yale Divinity School professors.

Sunday School for Children: During the 11:00 a.m. service, children ages 3 to 10 depart the service with their teachers for Sunday School in the Parish House. (All teachers have been vaccinated.) They return before the end of worship. See our website, churchoftheincarnation.org, for more information on Children and Family Ministries.

Wednesday Holy Eucharist: Join us each Wednesday at 12:15 p.m. for this Rite I spoken service of Holy Eucharist, which includes a brief homily and organ music.

Thursday Candlelight Communion: Join us each Thursday at 6:15 p.m. for Candlelight Communion, a service of Holy Eucharist that incorporates chant and silence as well as elements of contemporary worship. This service is informal and contemplative, with music led by a Cantor and a brief reflection by one of the clergy. You can also stream this service at youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation.

Daily Office: Services of Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer and Compline are held via Zoom. To view the weekly schedule, go to churchoftheincarnation.org/worship.

To receive access information for offerings held via Zoom, join our email distribution list by filling out the yellow Connect Card found in your pew or signing up through our website.