

Acts 13:44-52; John 14:7-14

‘When they saw the crowds, the Jews, prompted by jealousy, used blasphemies and contradicted everything Paul said.’

Jealousy is an incredibly powerful force. Destructive force. It can destroy a marriage or a friendship. It can divide people and communities. It can tear a church apart.

Jealousy makes us deaf and blind to what others really say and do. It makes us act irrationally. The Jews closed their hearts and minds, contradicted everything Paul said, lied, and accused him of blasphemy only because they saw a group of supporters who liked what he was teaching.

Sadly, there are people also in our Church who would deny and contradict any good idea, initiative or programme only because it is not Catholic. Alpha Course is a perfect example. One lady told Archbishop Lynx in Poland that “That course cannot possibly be good because it originated in the Anglican Church.’ Such reasoning is not only flawed and unfair. It is not Christian.

Suppose some clever Afro-Americans found a cure for cancer or Coronovirus, would then anyone say: ‘This medicine cannot be good because some Baptists made it in the States?’ Jealousy is always irrational because it’s fear driven. Rodney Dangerfield once famously said: ‘My wife’s jealousy is getting ridiculous. The other day she looked at my calendar and wanted to know who May was.’

We are called to imitate Jesus in whom there was no jealousy. Jesus never compared himself with anyone, but always discerned and promoted good in every person, even in sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes. He could do that because he genuinely loved people. ‘He that is jealous is not in love’, St Augustine said.

Jesus wasn’t jealous also because he loved himself. He knew his self-worth which was the fruit of his real and intimate relationship with his Father.

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Let's look into our hearts today. If jealousy has taken root there, let's promise ourselves to weed it out as soon as possible. The weed of jealousy is poisonous and destructive. It can destroy trust, peace, and unity among spouses, friends, family and church members. Let us turn to God for help to discern good in others and to find our contentment in him. For "the cure for the sin of envy and jealousy is to find our contentment in God (Jerry Bridges).