

Weekly Gospel Readings
The 3rd Sunday of Paone

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

On the 3rd Sunday of the Blessed month of Paone, the Church reads [Matthew 12:22-37](#). In these verses we read about a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute. Brought to Jesus so he can be healed. Christ then healed the demon-oppressed man, and the people were amazed. But when the Pharisees heard of this, they said he casted this demon out by Beelzebul.

Jesus responded by teaching that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. He said, “If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself... but if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” ([Matthew 12: 26-28](#)).

Jesus then spoke the Pharisees about the consequences of sin against the Holy Spirit saying, “therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.” ([Matthew 12:31](#)). But why is blasphemy against the Son of Man forgiven, whereas blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unforgiven? St. Augustine explains,

“Indeed, every sin and blasphemy is forgiven to people, and not only what is said against the Son of Man. As long as the sin of unrepentance (blasphemy against the Holy Spirit) is not there, then all sins are forgiven”.

Jesus then goes on to warn the Pharisees about the seriousness of their words and actions. He says that every idle word people speak will be judged on the day of judgment. He emphasizes the importance of good fruit, explaining that a tree is known by its fruit. “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit”. ([Matthew 12:33](#))

The Lord then challenges the Pharisees' hypocrisy, suggesting that they are evil, as they attribute his miraculous works to Satan, while their own teachings and actions are corrupt. “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” ([Matthew 12:34](#))

This passage presents several vital lessons for us:

- Jesus’ power and authority over evil.
- The arrival of God’s kingdom.
- The significance of recognizing and honoring the work of the Holy Spirit.
- The weight of the words we speak and the condition of our hearts, which will bear eternal consequences.

May God keeps us from hardening our hearts against the Holy Spirit, so that by living a life of repentance we may receive His mercy, the remission of our sins, and the joy of eternal life with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sources:

- Bible, English Standard Version:
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+12%3A+22-37&version=ESV>
- Commentaries on the Gospel of St. Matthew by Father Tadros Malaty