

## MARCH 27 2026 FATHER ERNIE DECICCIO

We're at the end of the fifth week of Lent. This weekend is going to be Palm Sunday. And as we read the Gospel these days, we get this sense of impending doom. Something terrible is about to happen.

Even though Jesus had been teaching, and preaching, and healing, even though Jesus was showing people God's love, many were turning against him. Especially those in authority. We're told that they wanted to arrest him, they wanted to stone him already. And they would do worse than that, as we'll remember on Good Friday.

This passage from the Gospel today says something interesting. It's not for any good work that we're going to stone you, but because you've spoken blasphemy. Our words can get us in trouble sometimes. Yes, we focus so much on the things that we do, or fail to do. But we should really watch our language too.

I tell myself that all the time, 'cause I'm known as Father No Filters. And you never know what comes out of my mouth. But I gotta be sensitive! Because our words can hurt! Others, and in Jesus' case, like ourselves too!

I always tell people that old line, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words may never hurt me," that line is not true. Words can hurt. And, in Jesus' case, words got him in trouble. And what did he say that was so wrong? That he was God's Son.

We're all God's children. And he even uses their own arguments against them. If the scripture says, "You are gods", what are you attacking me for now? I'm not doing anything that's against the word of God. But as much as his words were important, his actions were more important.

And our actions are more important too, because actions always speak louder than words.

And he tells them, "Believe the works if you don't believe me." The works of Jesus were works of healing. Works of mercy. Works of kindness and compassion. Imagine people not recognizing that. But of course, the opponents, their hearts were closed. No matter what Jesus did, they would never be satisfied. No matter what argument he came up with, they would never be convinced. No matter what miracle they would witness, it would not be good enough.

There's an old line that I think I saw at the end of the movie Song of Bernadette. It says something like, "For those who have faith, no proof is necessary. For those who don't have faith, no proof will suffice."

So Jesus was stuck. No matter what he did, people would hate him. People would want to see him dead. Thank goodness not everybody's like that. At the end of the Gospel, even though Jesus had to escape as it were, we're told that many believed in him. And even though among those many some would deny him, some would betray him, some would feel weak and hide, they still kept the faith.

As we prepare to journey through Holy Week, let's ask God to help us keep our faith, so that we can be united to Christ and his passion. And thus be united with him, in his resurrection.