

Tuesday 2nd of Lent

Gospel text (Mt 23,1-12): Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, «The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees sat on the seat of Moses (...). Do not do as they do, for they do not do what they say. They tie up heavy burdens and load them on the shoulders of the people, but they do not even raise a finger to move them. They do everything in order to be seen by people (...)».

The temptation: appearance of good

EDITORIAL TEAM evangelii.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the Master warns us against the hypocrisy and duplicity of the scribes and Pharisees. The latter —a religious contemporary group of Jesus Christ— are the target of this accusation. Jesus once labeled them as “whitewashed tombs”. It is proper to be tempted and take a moral appearance: we are not directly invited to do wrong, that would be absurd.

The temptation pretends to show the best: give up finally the illusory and effectively employ our forces in a better world. It also presents the claim of true realism: the real is what is found (disregarding the faith). And, indeed, a vice of the “righteousness” consisted in eliminating the good by formal compliance (no heart) of precepts which were not so much of God as a twisted human casuistry. Hence, it is clear the core of every temptation: bring order to our world for ourselves, without God, relying solely on our own abilities.

—Jesus, I want to do your will; I only care about your opinion.