

Tuesday 11 February

Today is Tuesday the 11th February, in the fifth week of Ordinary time.

The Sons of Korah sing Psalm 32: Blessed is he whose sin is forgiven.

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Mark.

'You abandon the commandment of God,' Jesus tells the Scribes and Pharisees, 'and hold to human tradition.' But how are we supposed to tell the difference? Over the centuries many disputes have arisen over this question and many schisms too! Religion and human tradition are so closely tied up together. But how do you distinguish? How, in practice, do you tell the difference between the commandments of God and 'human traditions'?

In the world around you, where do you see people 'teaching human precepts as doctrines'? Where do you see God's commandments being neglected in favour of 'human traditions'?

As you hear the reading again, can you get a sense of what it is that Jesus objects to? Is it the big deal the Pharisees make of it? The way they bring religious language into it? The way they make religious rules about things that are just ordinary common sense?

What feelings has hearing these challenging words of Jesus stirred up in you? Do you feel angry? Challenged? Uncomfortable? Uncertain? Confused? Whatever your thoughts and feelings are, bring them before the Lord now, speaking to him, and listening to him, in complete honesty and openness.