

“No good deed ever goes unpunished.”

This is a rather cynical turn of phrase that is attributed to several sources, but not really certain who said it first.

In today’s reading from the Book of Wisdom, we hear the grumblings of the wicked, who seek to tear down the “*just one*” because in following God’s way and obeying God’s law, he makes them look bad.

Such is human nature.

Jealousy and envy are supposedly found in every culture, and even in infants. Perhaps this is some sort of animal survival instinct.

However in polite society, jealousy is called the “Green Eyed Monster,” and envy is one of the “Seven Deadly Sins.”

The spiritual root of all sin is pride. And it is difficult to humble ourselves in such a way to avoid all sin ... especially under our own human power.

It is the saving grace of Jesus Christ, which pours from His sacrifice on the Cross that helps us to go beyond our human nature. The supernatural graces of Faith, Hope, and Love oppose sin ... and build us up to live the life of grace as children of God.

We are moving toward the close of Lent. The purpose of our penitential practices is to help us discipline and better control our human nature ... so that we might rely more and more on the gift of divine grace in our lives.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us receive from this most Blessed Sacrament, the infinite graces that pour forth from this the source and summit of our Christian life.

And as we near the “finish line” in this year’s Lent ... let us not slow down ... but like a runner in a race, may we sprint forward with greater zeal and a greater desire for the graces that can truly transform us.