

Daily Homily  
First Week in Lent, Friday  
26 February 2021  
[USCCB Daily Readings](#)

The connection between the first reading and Gospel today: Have the upper hand in virtue.

So this morning I was thinking about this... when it came to my brothers, I think the oldest three would argue from time to time and the bottom three, we had our arguments as well. Dave, the middle brother, had his foot in the upper three and the bottom three. Sometimes those arguments would lead to pushing, punching, knocking each other over, wrestling each other to the ground, throwing things at each other (so I've heard). Mom or dad would intervene, and when heads were cooled, they would tell us that this is no way to resolve an argument... that we had to be the bigger person over the disagreement, we had to be the bigger person over the anger, we had to be the bigger person over the issue, and ultimately we had to be the bigger person to not want to throw that first punch but rather, if necessary, walk away to resolve things at a later time.

Jesus uses different words. He doesn't say, "be the bigger person," but rather he does say, "let your righteousness surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees."

Jesus doesn't mix words here on this issue: reconcile, reconcile, reconcile. Is there any relationship broken, any issue unresolved, anything gnawing away at you? The hurt only festers and it only grows worse, like a wound that never heals. It must be brought to peace – maybe not a resolution right away – but be the "bigger person," "surpass the scribe and Pharisee" and bring it to peace.

What are the consequences... Ezekiel says it clearly: death. Jesus says it plainly: fiery Gehenna or being thrown into jail. Harsh realities that no one wants.

Be the bigger person even over sin. Bring it to peace. In this Lenten Season bring it to Jesus and bring it to him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Have the upper hand in virtue.