

Third Sunday of Lent

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Or

Faithful God, you desire us to turn away from things that do not satisfy and find our fulfilment in you. Have patience with us, tend and nurture our faith and make us bear the fruit of true conversion to the praise of your grace and mercy. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Exodus 3: 1-8.13-15

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. I must go and look at this strange sight, Moses said, and see why the bush is not burnt. Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush, Moses, Moses! he said. Here I am he answered. Come no nearer he said. Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father, he said the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God.

And the Lord said, I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.

Then Moses said to God, I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you. But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them? And God said to Moses, I Am who I Am. This he added is what you must say to the sons of Israel: I Am has sent me to you. And God also said to Moses, You are to say to the sons of Israel: The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.

This is the word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 102

R: The Lord is compassion and love.

My soul give thanks to the Lord,
All my being, bless his holy name.
My soul give thanks to the Lord
And never forget all his blessings. **R**

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
Who heals every one of your ills,
Who redeems your life from the grave.
Who crowns you with love and compassion. **R**

The Lord does deeds of justice,
Gives judgement for all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses
And his deeds to Israel's sons. **R**

The Lord is compassion and love,
Slow to anger and rich in mercy.
For as the heavens are high above the earth
So strong is his love for those who fear him. **R**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1-6.10-12

I want to remind you, brothers, how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert.

These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer.

All this happened to them as a warning, and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall.

This is the word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Glory and praise to you, O Christ! (*repeat*)
Repent, says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

Gospel

Luke 13:1-9

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Prayer over the Gifts

Gracious God, as we come to your table, reconcile us to one another, that our communion in Christ may truly give you praise. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

In this sacrament, O God, we receive the pledge of things yet hidden in heaven and are fed in our earthly sojourn with food and drink from on high. Let this gift work within us so that we may bear the fruit which will endure to eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

