

March 24, 2016 Third Sunday of Lent
Father, guide me to repentance!

Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15 Psalm 103:1-4, 6-8+11 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12 Luke 13:1-9

Moses comes to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God, and an angel of the Lord appears as a flaming bush. As he approaches it God's voice calls out to him not to come any closer. He is told to remove his sandals as this is holy ground. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has witnessed the afflictions of his people in Egypt and wants them released from bondage. Moses is to go to the Israelites and tell them, "I AM WHO AM," is the one who sent me to you.

The psalmist emphasizes we are to always bless the Lord, bless his holy name, because he is merciful and gracious. The Lord pardons inequities, heals all ills, redeems lives from destruction, secures justice especially for the oppressed, is slow to anger and rich in mercy.

In the second reading Paul reminds us that our ancestors passed through the sea and all of them ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink. However, all were not pleasing to God and we should view these as examples that indicate that if we constantly grumble then we can easily fall prey to the destroyer.



In the Gospel Jesus emphasizes that the Galileans slain by Pilate and those accidentally killed by a falling tower were not greater sinners than his listeners. He encourages repentance or else it is possible they will fall to the same fate. The fig tree parable indicates that our time to repent is not limitless. We are each given ample time to be fruitful and after that there is great risk.

**Father, you remind us, and
Your Son leads us to repentance
Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**

Adversity

We are all guilty of putting things off and today's readings remind us that delaying positive changes in our spiritual lives can be a dangerous risk. The newspapers constantly remind us of the unsuspecting loss of life by even the very young. Our only safe course is to take repentance seriously and seek good for ourselves as well as others. Be thankful and do not grumble even when circumstances are difficult for especially then the Lord will send us relief.

Oftentimes it helps us when we encounter adversities because they draw us into internal reflection where we realize when it really comes down to it we cannot place our hopes in worldly remedies. The same can happen when we encounter people who think wrongly of us even when we do good and mean well. These adversities increase our humility and keep us from vanity and they lead us to seek God's inward consolation.

If we can establish ourselves firmly in faith with God then human distractions will not be troublesome and disturb our inner peace. *When we die with Christ to the principles of this world we need not let their rules dictate to me their values.* (Colossians 2:20)

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