

# Sunday Readings

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

## FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Exodus 20:1-17

God spoke all these words. He said, 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

You shall have no gods except me.

You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God and I punish the father's fault in the sons, the grandsons, and the great-grandsons of those who hate me; but I show kindness to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not utter the name of the Lord your God to misuse it, for the Lord will not leave unpunished the man who utters his name to misuse it.

'Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath for the Lord your God. You shall do no work that day, neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your servants, men or women, nor your animals nor the stranger who lives with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that these hold, but on the seventh day he rested; that is why the Lord has blessed the sabbath day and made it sacred.

'Honour your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the Lord your God has given to you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his servant, man or woman, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is his.'

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 18:8-11. R/. Jn 6:68

**R/. You, Lord, have the message of eternal life.**

The law of the Lord is perfect,  
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,  
it gives wisdom to the simple. **R/.**

The precepts of the Lord are right,  
they gladden the heart.

The command of the Lord is clear,  
it gives light to the eyes. **R/.**

The fear of the Lord is holy,  
abiding for ever.

The decrees of the Lord are truth  
and all of them just. **R/.**

They are more to be desired than gold,  
than the purest of gold  
and sweeter are they than honey,  
than honey from the comb. **R/.**

## SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 1:22-25

While the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

## Gospel Acclamation

*Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!*

*I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord,  
whoever believes in me will never die.*

*Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!*

## GOSPEL

John 2:13:25

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.  
*Glory to you, O Lord.*

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

# Third Sunday of Lent

Lectionary Year B

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Back in the early third century, the great Christian scholar Origen offered an interesting perspective on today's Gospel passage: "Christ is especially jealous for the house of God in each of us, not wishing it to be a house of merchandise, or that the house of prayer become a den of thieves, since he is the son of a jealous God .... [These words] set forth the fact that God wishes nothing alien to his will to be mingled with the soul of anyone, but especially with the soul of those who wish to receive [the teachings of the] most divine faith".

Certainly, the Temple which the historical Jesus cleansed in today's Gospel was the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, a magnificent and imposing building of marble and precious materials that was one of the architectural wonders of the ancient world. But in 1 Corinthians 3, St. Paul reminds us that the great Temple of the Jews was not the *only* dwelling-place of God: "Do you not know that *you are God's temple* and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ... *God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.*" And it is *that* temple that Origen was most concerned about: *us*. If we are God's temple, then there is no denying that, in the lives of every one of us, our actions and lack of action have, at times, sullied the purity, beauty and magnificence of God's dwelling-place. Our weaknesses and sins have compromised the integrity of that Temple, have allowed things into it that are entirely incompatible - and especially incompatible with our dignity as baptized Christians, living sanctuaries of God's own presence. Looking over a good examination of conscience is enough to convince most of us of that fact. Our "temples" need cleansing from time to time. We need to "get rid of the junk" and allow ourselves to start over again, purified and restored and re-beautified, as God desires us to be.

## Prayer of the Week

### A Prayer for Lent

Lord, during this Lenten Season,  
nourish me with Your Word of life  
and make me one  
with You in love and prayer.  
Fill my heart with Your love  
and keep me faithful to the Gospel of Christ.  
Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness.  
Give me new life by Your Sacraments.  
Father, our source of life,  
I reach out with joy to grasp Your hand;  
let me walk more readily in Your ways.  
Guide me in Your gentle mercy,  
for left to myself I cannot do Your Will.  
I ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with You  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2024

### St Frances of Rome (1384-1440)

She was born in Rome in 1384 and was married at the age of 13. Although she had wanted to be a nun, she was happily married for 40 years and had three sons. She distributed gifts to the poor and ministered to the sick. She was remarkable for her humility and detachment, her obedience and patience in adversity (including her husband's banishment, the death of two of her sons from plague, and the loss of all her property). She was a mystic and contemplative, part of the great flourishing of mysticism in that period, and after her husband's death she retired to a convent she had founded, where she died on 9 March 1440.

## Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross are an ancient tradition going back to the fourth century when Christians went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

The Stations of the Cross can be rich, deep, and meaningful, but at the same time we can lose sight of their significance and how to relate them to our everyday lives. Here are 8 reasons why we should pray the Stations of the Cross:

- They Allow Us to Place Our Trust in Him
- They Put Us into the Story
- They Remind Us That Jesus Suffers with Us
- They Compel Us to Action
- They Helps Us Make a Decision for or Against Christ
- They Reveal God's Response to Evil in the World
- They Give Us the Certainty of God's Love for Us
- They Guide Us from the Cross to the Resurrection

"O, Our Jesus, guide us from the Cross to the resurrection and teach us that evil shall not have the last word, but love, mercy and forgiveness. O Christ, help us to exclaim again: 'Yesterday I was crucified with Christ; today I am glorified with Him. Yesterday I died with Him, today I live with Him. Yesterday I was buried with Him, today I am raised with Him'." - From Pope Francis' Address, Good Friday, April 18, 2014

