

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

Fr Callistus Khathali - HOMILY : 3RD SUNDAY OF LENT 20th March 2022

Exodus 3:1-8,13-15

1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12

Luke 13:1-9

We began the season of lent with an invitation to repent and believe in the gospel. The call to repentance is very strong in our gospel passage of today. Without repentance we are doomed to perish. I will focus on the second message, and that is our call to believe in the gospel. We are called to turn away from sin (repentance) so that we can fix our attention on the good news (the gospel).

The good news of today is in the call of Moses in our first reading. This was the Lord's response to the suffering of his people in Egypt. He therefore called Moses to go there and lead his people out of that bondage. The history of salvation is full of such calls of great people that the Lord used to set his people free. The greatness of such people was made possible by their response to the one who called them. When the fullness of time the Lord sent his own Son to set us free from the bondage of sin. Through the church the Lord continues to call men and women to be part of his great plan of salvation. Today on the third Sunday of Lent, this call is made through those adults preparing for baptism and reception into the church on Easter Saturday as they do their first scrutiny today.

The call of Moses reminds us that God calls ordinary people. It is recommended that the gospel passage of the third Sunday of Lent "Year A" (we are on "Year C") be used when we have first scrutiny. It is a story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:3-41). This is a very powerful story of Jesus not just calling an ordinary woman, but the one with a bad name in her community because of her sins. Bad people in the scriptures are usually nameless. She is just called the Samaritan woman.

We are indeed called to turn away from sin, and to focus our attention on the gospel. The first good news for Moses and the Samaritan is that God came down to them, both of them find themselves standing on holy ground sanctified by the Lord. In Eucharistic Prayer II of the Holy Mass we pray "we thank you for allowing us to be in your presence and minister to you." In our very act of worship we also find ourselves on holy ground where God is. Therefore our first step as we turn away from sin, is the holy ground where God wants us to be. It is on that holy ground that God sanctifies us as well.

Our gospel passage of today ends with the parable of the fig tree that did not produce fruit for three years. The owner of that vineyard was about to cut it, but the vine dresser asked for another year to dig around it and add more manure. A story of our patient God who gives us another chance to be what we are called to be. Our holy ground is therefore where God meets us as we are where he transforms us and sets us free from any form of bondage. Once we are truly set free, we are able to become what we truly are; created in his own image and likeness.

***May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.
I will meditate of the Glorious Mysteries as I pray for your personal intentions.***

Have a wonderful Sunday.

Fr Callistus