



AMDG
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
YEAR B
7TH MARCH 2021



The power and wisdom of the crucified Christ

OPENING PRAYER

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving
have shown us a remedy for sin,
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,
may always be lifted up by your mercy.

Today, we dedicate ourselves anew to keeping God's commandments, as we celebrate the mystery of God's love for us, shown through the wisdom and power of Christ.

Having rescued his people from slavery, God gives them the Ten Commandments. These offer guidance for liberation and right-living, rather than oppression and burden (*First Reading*).

The *Gospel*, however, indicates that many have not remained faithful to God's commandments. In their greed they have turned God's house into a marketplace. As Jesus ejects the buyers and sellers, we are reminded that salvation will come about through the death and resurrection of Christ, the true temple of the Divine.

The *Psalms* is a hymn to the life-giving qualities of God's Law. It shows the precepts and commands of God himself: God's own essence.

Paul reflects on Jesus's death, which is interpreted by many as a sign of weakness or foolishness. But it is in fact a demonstration to the world of God's power and wisdom. (*Second Reading*).

This week, we pray to hear the Word of God afresh in our own being. As we try to offer the Word hospitality and space to take root within us, we ask with the psalmist that it might 'revive the soul'. We also pray for the freedom of our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are victims of modern-day slavery.

PSALM 18 (19)

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.

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

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

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

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

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

As I grow quiet and still, I become more aware of the God who invites me,
desires me, and seeks my company right now ...

I try to become conscious of his loving attention in this moment.

I read the psalmist's words a couple of times slowly, maybe aloud.

I ask the living Spirit to pray in me, with me, and for me; to reveal God's message
of eternal life.

I rest on whatever phrase draws my attention. I soak it in.

I may like to recall a time in my life when God revived my soul ... restored my
innermost self.

Or maybe I am dry and weary, and need to call out to God to nurture and instruct
me, to guide me on the right path – a path that brings light and joy.

I ponder... and in silence allow the Lord time and space to speak to my heart and
soul anew.

How do I allow my love for God to affect everything I do ... and enlighten all
areas of my life?

With reverential 'fear of the Lord' and a readiness to seek God's will, I entrust my
whole being and the longings within me to my Lord, confident of his own longing
for my attention, my companionship, my love.

Glory be ...

GOSPEL JOHN 2: 13-25

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 anyone; he could tell what a person had in them.

As I settle into my place of prayer, I ask God to bless me ... to give me the grace to slow down and be attentive. I pray not to be distracted by any of my own cares or 'idols', whether external or internal.

I read this familiar passage a couple of times.

As the scene unfolds, I try to notice afresh Jesus's reactions, actions and words.

Perhaps I see his courage ... his authenticity ... his self-assurance?

Does this reassure me, unsettle me, attract me ...?

I notice what stirs in me, and share it with my Lord.

I may allow my imagination to wander freely with Jesus and his disciples as they stay in Jerusalem. I spend time with them ... seeing Jesus share the 'signs' and the Good News with the disciples and the crowds.

Just as Jesus knows those around him, he also knows all about me and what I hold in my heart. Do I find this comfortable ... or challenging?

How do I feel about Jesus watching me with mercy and compassion, as I fall and rise many times as his disciple?

I turn to my Lord, and in loving trust ask for the grace to know that I, too, am a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Our Father ...

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

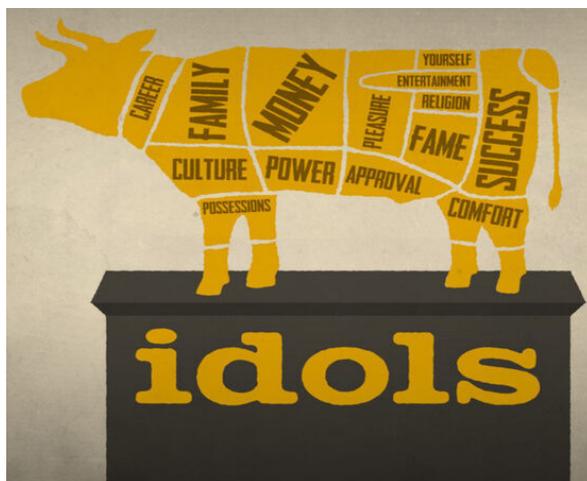
I will prove my holiness through you. I will give you a new spirit within you, says the Lord. *Entrance Antiphon*

Here we are preaching a crucified Christ ... who is the power and wisdom of God. *Second Reading*

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

This week's texts if you want to explore further:

Exodus 20: 1–17; Psalm 18 (19); 1 Corinthians 1: 22–25; John 2: 13–25



'You shall have no gods except me.' *First Reading*
I ponder my own idols and temptations ...



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JESUIT
Ministries



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