

## **REFLECTION FOR THE 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

We continue our Lenten journey today, with the Lord asking us to convert our hearts to his plans for salvation. He is a liberating God, who hears the cry of the poor and oppressed, and sends his messengers to bring “Good News to Zion” in his name, to announce a message of liberation, justice, and peace to the world.

As the first reading tells us, in order to do this, we need to draw close to God, worship him, listen to his Word, hear his name. Our God has a name, he lets himself be called by us and invoked by us. He is who he is; he exists for us. He is always with us, listening to our distressed cries and showing us paths to freedom and life. Let us listen to him and to the prophets he sends us today; better still, let each of us listen to his voice and become heralds of his Word of salvation for all people. Let us trust in the Lord, who, as the psalm tells us, is forgiving and full of compassion. He forgives our sins, he brings justice to the oppressed, and he wants to give us his grace and mercy.

However, as St. Paul tells us in the second reading, we must remain firm in our faith, taking care not to fall. This is because all of us, as the Gospel tells us, are fragile, and are sinners. Sometimes we think we are better than others and we see the misfortunes that befall our brothers and sisters as punishment for their bad deeds. However, Jesus tells us that we should not judge anyone and that the misfortunes that can happen in our lives are not God's punishment. For if they were, we would all be dead by now, because we all have sin in our lives. Let us ask the Lord for his light, his strength to live our faith with courage, avoid murmuring, judging others, and boasting. Everything is a gift, so let us live a grateful life, recognizing the Lord's goodness towards us and striving to always follow the Lord's ways. God is patient with us, but the day of harvest will always come and on that day the Lord wants us to bear fruit. Let us not be barren fig trees, but trees with tasty, abundant fruit. May our lives be marked by fruits of truth, justice and peace, the fruits that God wants to harvest in our lives.

Amen.