



GOD'S WORD FOR THIS WEEK

Sunday 7th March 2021

THE COLLECT OF THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

*Merciful Lord,
Grant your people grace
to withstand the temptations
of the world, the flesh and the devil
and with pure hearts and minds
to follow you, the only God;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**Our Considerations and Prayers this week are written by Dr. Kieran O'Mahony,
Augustinian Priest, Archdiocese of Dublin**

If you have every had the pleasure of listening to Kieran O'Mahony speak you will promptly realise that you are in the presence of a most learned individual who has spent a considerable amount of time in research (particularly around the Pauline Letters). Kieran provides in-depth information on the weekly lectionary for the Catholic Diocese in Dublin which can be found on

<https://www.tarsus.ie/resources/000-PDFs/Lent-3B21.pdf>

THE FIRST READING

Exodus 20: 1-17

*20*Then God spoke all these words:

2 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³ you shall have no other gods before ^{*} me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation ^{*} of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹ For six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁰ But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

12 Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

13 You shall not murder. ^{*}

14 You shall not commit adultery.

15 You shall not steal.

16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

17 You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.



Take the very words of God here: "I am the Lord your God". The very ground of our being comes to us and offers us his covenant love. Prayer of the mystery of God.

Read through the commandments slowly and see if there is a word of guidance you yourself need at this moment in your life. Prayer of conversion.

THE EPISTLE READING

1 Corinthians 1: 18-25

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Jesus himself is the "locus" of God's presence for us, a presence found in life, through others, in the Word of God and in the sacraments. What have been my own moments of encounter, with him who gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction?

PRAY TODAY

God of surprises, surprise us again with the paradox of your power and wisdom in our lives. May we never grow complacent about your astonishing love, that we may say with St Paul, the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Amen.

THE GOSPEL READING

John 2: 13-22

13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' ¹⁹Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' ²⁰The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.



We all tend to confine God to received traditions (places, images, words) but we know that "God is greater than our conscience." (1 John 3:20) How do I experience that "more" of God and keep it before my eyes?

PRAY TODAY

Heavenly Father, the folly of the cross mocks our human wisdom and the weakness of the crucified puts worldly power to shame.

Banish from our hearts every pretence of might and knowledge, that, by the power flowing from Christ's resurrection, your people may be raised up from the death of sin and fashioned into a living temple of your glory.

Dr. Kieran O'Mahony