

Reflection for the Third Sunday of Lent

The Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent (Luke 13:1-9) calls us to reflect on repentance, transformation, and God's mercy. When some people mention the tragic death of Galileans at the hands of Pilate, Jesus does not focus on the tragedy itself but on the need for repentance. He says, "Unless you repent, you will all perish as they did." This challenges us to look inward rather than blaming others, asking ourselves how we are living and whether we are aligned with God's will. During Lent, we are called to examine our lives, not to judge others but to reflect on our own need for conversion.

Jesus follows this with the parable of the fig tree. The owner of the vineyard wants to cut it down for being barren, but the gardener pleads for one more year to cultivate it, giving it a chance to bear fruit. This is a powerful image of God's patience and mercy. Even when we feel spiritually barren, God continues to offer us opportunities to repent and grow. Lent is a time to cultivate that fruit in our lives—through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and acts of love.

Yet, the parable also contains a sense of urgency. While God's mercy is abundant, there is a time for transformation, and we are not to take this grace for granted. The gardener's plea for more time reflects God's desire for us to bear fruit, but it also reminds us that we must respond to His grace and use the time given to us.

This Lent, let us recognize that God is offering us the opportunity to turn our hearts back to Him. Let us not delay but respond today, cultivating the fruits of repentance and holiness. Through this season of grace, may we allow God to shape and transform our lives.