



## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

“... It may bear fruit next year ...” (Lk 13:9)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**”  
for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’  
(Pope Francis)

### THE GOSPEL

...Some people arrived and told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than any others, that this should have happened to them? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell, killing them all? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.’ He told this parable, ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to his vinedresser, “For three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?” “Sir,” the man replied, “leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.”’

(Luke 13:1-9)

**Read and re-read the Gospel passage**, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

**Talk with Jesus** about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

## THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

**Innocent people died** in two tragedies. A traditional response was: 'It is the victims' fault: They sinned!' Jesus rejects this answer. God's response to sin is not like this. The fig tree parable explains God's compassion and patience. Fig trees, although resilient, can wither with neglect. With time, and care, they can recover. Our lives can be like that. Lent reminds us that God offers every person opportunities for a change of heart and possibilities for re-focusing priorities.

## FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

**Our Lord, by his very presence**, was creating and offering a whole new world to his followers – a whole new way of living, loving and experiencing life. As followers of Jesus today, these are still questions for all of us. Does my life speak of newness and hope? Does my life say that things can be different? That fidelity, intimacy and respect for each person (including the 'uncomely'...) are really what life is all about? As long as the Gospel has the capacity to make us feel uncomfortable, we are in good shape. For that is a sign that our heart is open to the Word... As long as we feel the Word cutting into our heart, then our heart is still in the right place. (*Patrick O' Sullivan, Prayer and Relationships, 63*)

**...In all the ways he spoke and acted**, lived and suffered, and continues to be present to the community of faith, Jesus is "he who saves".  
(*Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 95*)

**...His followers were called "Christians."** By committing themselves to the folly of following him, they committed themselves to the way of his vulnerable love. (*Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 97*)

**When we serve the poor and the sick**, we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbours, because in them, we serve Jesus.  
(*Saint Rose of Lima in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 241*)

**God does not look at the greatness of our actions**, but at the love with which we do them.  
(*Saint Therese of Lisieux in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 273*)

**Christians do not despair in the fight against evil.** Christianity cultivates an incurable trust: It does not believe that negative and disintegrating forces can prevail. (*Pope Francis, General Audience, 21 June 2017*)

**No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless** – There's too much work to do! (*Dorothy Day, in Carol Graser, Pray to Love - Love to Pray, 56*)

**We have to serve in God's way, not in ours.**

*(St Teresa of Avila in Carol Graser, Pray to Love - Love to Pray, 33)*

**The solution to tiredness**, oddly enough, is not to stand still and rest. It is to set out and become pilgrims of hope. This is my invitation to you: walk in hope! Hope overcomes all weariness, every crisis and every worry. It gives us a powerful incentive to press forward, for it is a gift received from God himself. The Lord fills our life with meaning, sheds light on our path and shows us its ultimate direction and goal... *(Pope Francis, Message for World Youth Day, 2024)*

**Find words or an image for**

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.







## PRAYER

### Christ Be In Me

Christ be in my heart and in my loving.

Christ be in my mind and in my thinking.

Christ be in my eyes and in my seeing.

Christ be in my ears and in my hearing

Christ be in my voice and in my speaking.

Christ be in my life and all my living. Amen.

*(Adaptation based on 'Breastplate of St. Patrick' in Maurice Ryan, Heartlines, 144)*



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