

Homily for III (3) Sunday of Lent Year C 20-03-2022 by Fr. Lubem Waya, osj.

First Reading: Exodus 3:1-8.13-15

Psalm: Psalm 103

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-6.10-12

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

WHERE WOULD GOD MEET YOU?

Today in the dramatic call of Moses presented to us, as ordinary as it would seem, it marked a turning point not just in his life and the life of Israel, but in the salvation history of the whole human race. He was going about his normal ordinary everyday duties of tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro but paying attention, and in his attentiveness, he recognised an extraordinary event of the bush which was burning without being consumed. This arrested his attention and when he drew near, he encountered God. This singular encounter became a moment of transformation for him from being a herder of flock, leading and tending livestock to being a “herder” of a new flock, Israel, leading and tending God’s own people.

Indeed, God comes to meet us where we are, but we must recognise and accept Him for Him to make use of us. Like Moses, the more a person hones his or her capacities for patient, careful attention, the more one is readying oneself for finding God in all things. So, God who does not call the equipped but equips those He calls, always goes about seeking to meet us in the very ordinary circumstances of our lives. He is the one who invites us by coming to meet us because Divine presence is inviting rather than coercive. And like Moses, if we make bold to welcome Him into our lives, He comes in and transforms us for the mission for which He is calling us. Where would God meet you today, now? Would you even recognise that it is Him?

St. Joseph Marello, founder of the Oblates of St. Joseph, charged all of us his spiritual children to live day by day trying to recognise in every event the will of God. On mount Horeb, God’s Mountain, Moses recognised God’s will in His presence and power to save Israel from destruction in Egypt. Christ emphasises same in the two events He uses to address the issue of suffering and sin. Pilate’s slaughter of the worshippers in an unprovoked attack in the temple, and the collapse of the tower at Siloam are incidents of non-culpable suffering and unexpected death. They are tragic and can happen to anyone, but their consequences are not to compare with life’s worst tragedy which is to perish in sin. So, there is the constant and urgent need to be prepared at all times through repentance, especially in this season of lent, so as not to perish. Are you prepared?

God’s patience with us is depicted in the vignerón’s attitude who pleaded with the vineyard owner to give him more time to care for the fig tree till it produces. An unfruitful fig tree is a sign of unrepentance and a lack of response to God’s loving invitation. This also comes with a warning that we should not presume upon God’s patience and mercy. His judgement surely comes pretty soon or later. Lent is therefore the extra opportunity we are given to begin to produce good fruits without delay. Now is that favourable time to grow in holiness and righteousness so that we can overcome the wicked lusts for forbidden things, lest the one who thinks he is safe, falls. Therefore, do not tolerate sinful habits nor excuse unrepentant sin and wrongdoing, for these result in bad fruit, painful discipline, and spiritual disease that ultimately leads to death and destruction. May the Lord show us His compassion and love, and grant us the grace of repentance. Amen.