

Readings for 12th March – Third Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 56: 1-8

¹ Thus says the LORD:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.

² Happy is the mortal who does this,
the one who holds it fast,
who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it,
and refrains from doing any evil.

³ Do not let the foreigner joined to the LORD say,
'The LORD will surely separate me from his people';
and do not let the eunuch say,
'I am just a dry tree.'

⁴ For thus says the LORD:
To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,

⁵ I will give, in my house and within my walls,
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

⁶ And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,
and hold fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;

for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.

⁸ Thus says the Lord God,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.

1 Corinthians 12. 12 – 31, 13

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members
of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks,
slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.

¹⁵ If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the
body', that would not make it any less a part of the body.

¹⁶ And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to
the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the
whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as
he chose.

¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be?

²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the
head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'

²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are
indispensable,

²³ and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe
with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with
greater respect;

²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has
so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member,
²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may
have the same care for one another.

²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues.

²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³

¹ But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

13 If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,^[a] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant

⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

⁹ For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part;

¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly,^[b] but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

John 15: 1-17

¹ I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower.

² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.

¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹² This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you.

¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

¹⁶ You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.

¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.