

# 3rd Sunday of Lent

## Luke 13:1-9

*'Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'*

There were some present at that very time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'

And he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?" And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."'

## Reflection

This Gospel might seem tough to get at first, but here's the key: Jesus challenges an old idea that bad things happen as punishment for sin. Instead, He focuses on compassion and the need for everyone to repent—not because God's out to get us, but because He loves us and wants us to live better lives.

Lent is all about reflecting on where we can improve, being sorry for what we've done wrong, and having hope for the future because God forgives us and loves us no matter what. Through our actions, we can share that love with others. Think about how you've been compassionate—maybe by listening, helping, or just being kind. Jesus shows us compassion in this Gospel; how can we do the same?

The fig tree in the story is a reminder that God's waiting for us to respond to His love, just like He wanted Israel to respond in Jesus' time. Lent is the perfect moment to act, to show kindness, and to bring hope to others. How will you use this time to make a difference?

## Materials needed

- Paper
- Pens

## Activity

'Be kind and love. For love is the first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and love, more than all else you can bring them.' Blessed Rosalie Rendu

One of the Vincentian values is compassion:

We aim to show compassion that is non-judgemental towards those with whom we work. We are moved by the struggles people face, and we seek to help. As we are about halfway through Lent this would be a good time to reflect on our acts of service, one of the three ways we prepare for the celebration of Easter; prayer, fasting and acts of kindness.

After a short time of reflection, share ways that you have shown compassion to others, as a group or as an individual. What other things would you like to do as members of the SVP? Make an action plan.

## Call to Action

Take what you've reflected on today and turn it into action. This week, commit to one act of compassion that makes a real difference—whether it's helping someone who's struggling, listening to someone who needs to be heard, or giving your time to serve others. Let's show, as Blessed Rosalie Rendu said, that love and kindness are the greatest gifts we can offer.

