

**Lectionary readings: Exodus 20: 1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1: 18-22; John 2: 13-22 (Third Sunday in Lent)**

**For reflection and prayer**

- **Exodus 20:** In these Ten Commandments God is asking us to rely on Him completely and live His way. That means letting go of all the other 'securities' we hold on to, and the ways we convince ourselves that God's way is the ideal and something too hard for us; and so we water down what God requires of us. Why not reflect, during Lent, on what our 'securities' are and whether we are willing to let go of these, and reflect on how God wants us to live and how we can make more time for God in our busy lives? We might like to reflect, too, on what guides our decisions and choices - love for God and for others, or self-interest?
- **Psalm 19:** God's law comes from His heart of love. It renews us, enabling us to pull our lives together; it gives us wisdom, pointing us on the right path; it shows us the way to real joy; it brings enlightenment, giving us fresh insight; it awakens compassion, filling us with love; it leads us to hidden treasure. When we are freely and fully surrendered to God, then we become a beneficial presence. Lord, help me to realise anew the security and serenity of Your loving presence in my life and help me to sacrifice all for the treasure that is You.
- **1 Corinthians 1:** To our society today God's commandments and ways would seem an absurdity, a source of ridicule, weakness. Our society worships power, wealth, status. But look at the mess these 'gods' have landed us in. To many, the Christian faith which

proclaims that God has shown Himself in human flesh, weak and vulnerable, is utter foolishness. But the very fact that God has come to share our life, surprising us by His unpredictability, and challenging us to look at our lives, unnerves people because it reveals God, not as distant, and one who can be ignored, but as a God who wants to be intimately connected with us in our everyday lives.

- **John 2:** Jesus was angry at the injustices carried out in the Temple precincts. The Temple should have been a place of prayer, a place of holiness. Paul tells us that we are each the temple of the Holy Spirit, the people in whom God dwells. What would Jesus find in us? Are our lives places of prayer, holy, whole? Would Jesus be angry with what He finds in us who call ourselves His people? Lent is a time to reflect on how we live our lives, what needs to be cleaned up in our lives, what patterns of behaviour are not life-giving, and letting God's love seep right into the depths of our being so that we allow God to affect our thinking, our relationships, our activities, our whole way of living.

**A Prayer**

Come, Lord, in this time of Lent, and within our worship and prayers and everyday living, speak to our deepest selves, so that Jesus' presence and life may make such an impression on us that we will draw strength and wisdom and insight and allow His love to radiate from us. May this Lent be a time when we reflect on the sacredness of life and the holiness of our person and how we can live in the way of Jesus, sharing His mind, His heart, His single-mindedness, His sacrifice. Amen.