

27 MAR 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF

LENT



BIBLICAL MEDITATION

28 MAR -2 APR



## READ

"See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. "Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands. They will not labor in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD. (Isaiah 65:17-25)

## MEDITATE

The coming of a new heaven and a new earth tells us a crystal-clear fact: We must complete the things God has entrusted to us while we are living on earth, so that by the time our Lord comes again, we can give an account to Him and live forever and ever in the new heaven and new earth with our Lord.

## PRAY

O Lord our God, in your holy Sacraments you have given us a foretaste of the good things of your kingdom: Direct us, we pray, in the way that leads to eternal life, that we may come to appear before you in that place of light where you dwell for ever with your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



## READ

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the LORD has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. (Psalm 46:1-8)

## MEDITATE

The entire passage tells us that God is our refuge. He is LORD God of hosts and the mighty God. He is also God of Jacob. He is even 'Immanuel', God with us. In times of danger, may we rely on God's presence so that we who are weak and have little faith will not tremble.

## PRAY

O God, with you is the well of life, and in your light we see light: Quench our thirst with living water, and flood our darkened minds with heavenly light; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



## READ

This is what the LORD says: "In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances, to say to the captives, 'Come out,' and to those in darkness, 'Be free!' "They will feed beside the roads and find pasture on every barren hill. They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water. I will turn all my mountains into roads, and my highways will be raised up. See, they will come from afar— some from the north, some from the west, some from the region of Aswan." Shout for joy, you heavens; rejoice, you earth; burst into song, you mountains! For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones. But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me." "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! (Isaiah 49:8-15)

## MEDITATE

A land of milk and honey is not necessarily a prerequisite of a time of favour and a day of salvation by God. God is calling upon His servants to go towards a land of desolate heritages. When God's people are willing to move forward, they shall feed along the ways (v9) and shall not hunger or thirst (v10), nor shall they be struck down by anything (v10), so that they will be guided by springs of water (v10). Such springs of water is not a nature of the desolate lands. Rather, they are things brought along when God's people answered and responded to go to the deserted land. These people are the blessings for the land. They indeed are the 'milk and honey'. Are you willing to leave your comfort zone and go to the deserted land with this in mind, so that we will witness how God turns tears into laughter, and deep pain into big embrace?

## **PRAY**

O Lord our God, you sustained your ancient people in the wilderness with bread from heaven: Feed now your pilgrim flock with the food that endures to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.





### READ

We have sinned, even as our ancestors did; we have done wrong and acted wickedly. When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea. (Psalm 106:6-7)

At Horeb they made a calf and worshiped an idol cast from metal. They exchanged their glorious God for an image of a bull, which eats grass. They forgot the God who saved them, who had done great things in Egypt, miracles in the land of Ham and awesome deeds by the Red Sea. So he said he would destroy them— had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them. (Psalm 106:19-23)

### MEDITATE

The Israelites only believed in what they saw. Reflect on your own faith from this.

What reminders do the Israelites' rebellious behaviours give you? What are the things I should repent for before God?

### PRAY

Almighty and most merciful God, drive from us all weakness of body, mind, and spirit; that, being restored to wholeness, we may with free hearts become what you intend us to be and accomplish what you want us to do; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



### READ

After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near. (John 7:1-2)

However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. (John 7:10)

At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Messiah? But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from." Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. (John 7:25-30)

### MEDITATE

Thanks be to God. This is God's perfect will. To fulfil God's will, the Lord obeyed God and even died on the Cross. (Philippians 2:8) Today, Jesus has received honour and glory. God the Father has raised Him to the highest and given Him the name above all names. Therefore, for us who believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, by believing Him we may have life in His name, the indwelling of the Spirit, and enjoy the living water.

### PRAY

O God, you have given us the Good News of your abounding love in your Son Jesus Christ: So fill our hearts with thankfulness that we may rejoice to proclaim the good tidings we have received; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



## READ

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet." Others said, "He is the Messiah." Still others asked, "How can the Messiah come from Galilee? Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him. Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards replied. "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them." Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?" They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee." (John 7:37-52)

## MEDITATE

John 7:38 says, 'Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' We shall believe that God is happy to pour upon us His Holy Spirit. If a child keeps running around and does not sit properly to finish his meal, his mother will take up his bowl, follow him around to feed him.

Similarly, God will pour upon us the Holy Spirit. He chases us from behind and says, 'Don't run. Have a sip!' All we need to do is to believe in Him.



## **PRAY**

Mercifully hear our prayers, O Lord, and spare all those who confess their sins to you; that those whose consciences are accused by sin may by your merciful pardon be absolved; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.