

First Sunday of Lent

A cop stopped a car for speeding.

Cop: you were going fast. Driver: I was trying to keep up with traffic. Cop: There isn't any.

Driver: I Know! That's how far behind I am.

Dear Friends,

Lent is a time to show our gratitude to God and deepen the relationship with God. We have temptations in our lives. By relying on God, we can be faithful to God, and to ourselves, and overcome the temptations.

Trust has become more common in our day-to-day life. When you download an app in your device whether it is an android or an iPhone, they ask you to click 'agree or disagree'. We all click agree without reading the whole thing, hoping it will not do harm. It happens so many times in different situations in life. When we can trust those little things, which sometimes bring damage to us; why don't we trust in God, who will never bring damage to us in any way?

Today's liturgy helps us to show our gratitude and trust to God, who can protect us from all our temptations and dangers.

In the first reading today, Moses talks to the people about gratitude and sacrifice. Two essential features of every religion in the world, are gratitude and sacrifice. They are interrelated: sacrifice is the expression of our gratitude, and gratitude is the spiritual sacrifice, the denial of our pride, self-sufficiency, and autonomy. Moses asked the believer to remember the path they had gone through. He offered the first fruits of his harvest as a sign of gratitude to God for the accompaniment in their journey of life. They celebrated it as a feast of weeks. Sacrifice is a 'Thank you' and 'count your blessings' exercise.

In the second reading, St. Paul says, "salvation is for all who believed in Jesus' death and resurrection.

In the Gospel, Jesus was tempted. The forty days of Lent are offered to God in imitation of Jesus, who "was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, where he was tempted by the devil." Jesus chose to rely on the care of his Father, to surrender himself as servant to the will and plan of his Father, and to follow God's will in Jerusalem, even if that meant terrible suffering and shameful death on the cross.

C.S. Lewis said, "if you do one good deed your reward usually is to be set to do another and harder and better one. "Jesus was always ready to do the next good deed, whether

or not he was still dealing with the last. Relying on his father, he was grateful to take up another good deed.

Today we become tired of all our temptations. Most of the times we yield ourselves to it, maybe because of our weaknesses, or not relying on God more. This is the time for us to reflect about how we can overcome our temptations by trusting in Jesus. Jesus' love for God, and his desire to do his will, are two strong tools to overcome Satan.

Today, with grateful hearts and one in spirit, let us express our trust in God with our heart and mind, and also to our neighbors.