



Have mercy on us and on the whole world



POPE FRANCIS' INTENTIONS MARCH 2024



We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.

From death to Life”

‘And the people spoke out again against God and against Moses’. This describes the account of the final rebellious act in the desert against both God and Moses. They now refuse God’s gifts, such as the manna, which was keeping them alive. They turn their back on God and on the life He offers. So, the Lord, fed up with this stubborn people, sent fiery serpents among them and many People of Israel died. Once again Moses pleads for the people and asks God to show His mercy.

In response, God tells Moses to make a bronze serpent and raise it above the people so that all that gazed upon it would recover. Ironically, it was the image of the ‘cause of the death’ that became the source of healing and life. To gaze upon the serpent of course implied the belief that God has the power to save. The symbols associated with Jesus are rooted in such accounts in the history of the Jewish people.

In Jewish eyes, the serpent is the cause of the fall and the bringer of death, with its origins in the Creation story. Now once again, in the desert, it becomes the source of death to the People of Israel. However, due to the pleading of Moses, God turns this symbol of death into a symbol of life. When the People of Israel gazed upon the bronze serpent (on a piece of wood) held up by Moses they are cured, and life is restored to them.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the ruling Council, comes to Jesus but it is difficult for him to understand what Jesus was trying to teach him about the Kingdom of God. So, Jesus draws on this desert account from their history to try to explain further His special role as God’s human Son. It is this imagery that Christ evokes in the mind of Nicodemus when He tells him that the Son of Man, Jesus Himself, must be raised up on ‘a piece of wood’ to bring life to the people. All who gaze upon Him and believe in the power of the Cross to save them, will be saved. The cross was for the people of Israel a symbol of death, an instrument of execution. But through Christ this has now become, for all who believe, the instrument of the salvation and life. God so loved the people of the world that He did not want to condemn them and so over and over He had offered them ways to salvation. So great was this love that He finally sent His only Son, who would be raised up on the Cross to be the hope and life of all who believe in Him.

God, because of His great mercy, does not condemn anyone. He wants all peoples to be saved. Jesus has paid the full price for our sins. Just as the Israelites simply had to gaze upon the bronze snake in order not to die, so all we need to do is place our faith and trust in the saving work of Jesus on the Cross and we will be saved. Sadly, there are those who chose to refuse to acknowledge Him and so they condemn themselves by their own choice ~ their choice not God’s.

**Repent
+
Believe
in the
Gospel**



Dominican Priory Newsletter

1224 Dominicans - 800 years in 2024

The Season of Lent



Fourth Sunday of Lent

10th March 2024

~~~This Sunday’s Readings & Gospel~~~

### First Reading from the Book of the Chronicles

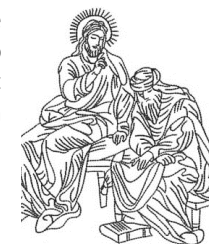
The People of Israel, turned away from God and worshiped false gods, engaged in shameful practices of the pagans and defiling the Temple. God sent them messenger after messenger to call them to repent but they refused. And so, the Lord let Israel be overthrown and the Temple destroyed. The exile continued until Cyrus became King of Persia. Fulfilling His promise, God moved Cyrus to set the People of Israel free and to rebuild the Temple. From to where-ever they were scattered they would now be reunited.

### Reading from the Letters of Saint Paul

Saint Paul writes to tell the Ephesians that because of His great love God is totally merciful. Through Jesus Christ, He has freed us from sin and death and given a place in heaven. Every generation will come to know that they are saved not by their own actions but by the mercy of God. This salvation is a gift from God.

### Holy Gospel according to Saint John

God sent his Son into the world so that through him the world might be saved. When Nicodemus asks Jesus how he is to be saved Jesus tells him that is it only when the Son of Man is lifted high shall salvation be his. Recalling Moses in the desert, Jesus tells Nicodemus that everyone one who believes in the Crucified Christ will have life. Because God so loved the world, He sent His only Son to save the people of the world and enable them to have eternal life through Him. God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but to save it. Those who refused to believe in Christ Jesus condemn themselves because they prefer to live in darkness rather than the light, to do evil rather than good.



Saint Eustace’s Church and Prior &

Dominican College of Saint Thomas Aquin  
Newbridge, Co Kildare W12 C241.

Telephone: 045 487 200

Email: [newbridge.community@dominicans.ie](mailto:newbridge.community@dominicans.ie)



800<sup>th</sup> JUBILEE  
ORDER OF PREACHERS  
IN IRELAND

