

3rd Sunday of Lent C

Our 1st reading today was from Exodus – Moses and the burning bush
But let me ask you – Why was Moses up in the mountains tending sheep?

Wasn't he brought up by Pharaoh's daughter?

He killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave – He's Hiding

Hiding in the "Land of Midian" –

Married Zipporah, daughter of Jethro, has a son

Starting a new life in anonymity (to cover his sin)

Sound familiar?

Have you ever tried to cover up your sin – to hide it and move on?

Nice plan – BUT – it's not God's plan

God doesn't want us hiding – stuck in our sin – He wants to forgive us

So what is God's plan? IT'S IN THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM 103

The Lord is kind and merciful

He pardons all our iniquities, heals all your ills

Redeems your life from destruction,

Crowns you with kindness and compassion

The Lord is kind and merciful

The Lord secures justice and rights of the oppressed

He has made His way known to Moses

And His deeds to the children of Israel

The Lord is kind and merciful

Merciful and gracious is the Lord

Slow to anger and abiding in kindness

For as the heavens are high above the earth

So surpassing is His kindness to those

fear Him

The Lord is kind and merciful

Is the Lord's plan for us that we should hide our sin?

That we should cover it up – move on – still in our sin?

NO WAY - *The Lord is kind and merciful*

He comes to Moses to lead Israel from slavery to freedom

He sends Jesus to lead us from the slavery of sin to the freedom of forgiveness

(Sin is just another form of slavery)

That is what St. Paul is talking about in the 2nd reading from COR

"I don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were under a cloud"

ALL passed through the Red Sea

ALL ate heavenly food (manna)

All drank water from the rock

YET despite all this – they sinned

They grumbled against God

So if you think YOU are secure

Take care – if THEY can fall – So can You

And then you're right back into slavery of sin

That is why, in the Gospel, Jesus says **“If you don’t repent, you will perish”**

It can’t be said any plainer than that

The Lord is kind and merciful

But to get the mercy – you need to repent

Do you understand the image of the fig tree Jesus uses?

We are the fig tree – and God expects fruit!

Christian lives should bear fruit – they’re listed in Galatians

Love Joy Peace Patience Goodness Kindness Self-Control

If there’s no fruit, Jesus says its going to be cut down and burned

What is the farmer’s solution to a tree with no fruit?

MANURE

Are you bearing fruit? Not really.

Have you repented of your sin? (& abstain from it) Not really.

Well then don’t be surprised if God sends you MANURE

(O God, bless me – O God I need a job – O God send me money)

MANURE – some of you are there already!

God will break you down so He can build you up

The Lord is kind and merciful

But we need to repent in order to receive His mercy

And when we do God will be faithful and lead us out of sin into the promised land

Why?

The Lord is kind and merciful