

Reading for Weekday in the Third Week of Lent

March 12th 2026

First reading

Jeremiah 7:23-28

‘This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God.’

Thus says the Lord: “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.” But they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts, and went backwards and not forwards. From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day. Yet they did not listen to me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

‘So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. And you shall say to them, “This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.” ’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 95(94):1-2. 6-7b. 7c-9. R7c, 8a

O that today you would listen to his voice!

‘Harden not your hearts.’

Come, let us ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.

Let us come into his presence, giving thanks;
let us hail him with a song of praise.

O come; let us bow and bend low.

Let us kneel before the Lord who made us,
for he is our God, and we the people,
the people of his pasture, the flock of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!

*‘Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your forebears put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.’*

Gospel Acclamation

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.
Even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
for I am gracious and merciful.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.

Joel 2:12-13

Gospel

Luke 11:14-23

‘Whoever is not with me is against me.’

At that time: Jesus was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the crowd marvelled. But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons’, while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armour in which he trusted and divides his spoil. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Some people are completely wrong about Jesus, declaring that he heals by means of Satan’s power. Instead of acknowledging that God was powerfully at work in Jesus, they declared that Satan was at work in his life. It is hard to conceive of a greater error than that. They were calling good evil. In response to their grave misjudgement, Jesus declared that his healing work was done through the finger of God. God was at work in Jesus and some of his own contemporaries could not see it. We can all be blind to the finger of God, to the working of God among us.

We are graced in some way by God and we hardly notice it. The Lord blesses us and rather than recognize the blessing and giving thanks for it we focus on what we do not have or what is wrong in our lives. We need to keep on praying for the gift to see as Jesus sees, which is the opposite of how people in the gospel saw. Jesus saw the working of God in creation, in the sower, the vineyard, the flowers of the field and birds of the air. He saw God’s presence in those whom many people had written off. Jesus teaches us to see with generous and hopeful eyes. When we see with those kind of eyes, then, in the words of Paul, we will be inspired to give thanks in all circumstances.