

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF MAR 19-20, 2022**

Third Sunday of Lent, Year C

**Gospel reading (Lectionary 30)**

Lk 13:1-9

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans
whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices.
Jesus said to them in reply,
“Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way
they were greater sinners than all other Galileans?
By no means!
But I tell you, if you do not repent,
you will all perish as they did!
Or those eighteen people who were killed
when the tower at Siloam fell on them—

do you think they were more guilty
than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem?
By no means!
But I tell you, if you do no repent,
you will all perish as they did!”

And he told them this parable:
“There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard,
and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none,
he said to the gardener,
‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree
but I have found none.
So cut it down.
Why should it exhaust the soil?’
He said to him in reply,
‘Sir, leave it for this year also,
and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it;
it may bear fruit in the future.
If not you can cut it down.’”

**Intercession**

For our parish community, that responding to the call for deeper conversion, we might seek out concrete opportunities to produce good fruit.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

In today’s Gospel, Jesus calls out an uncomfortable truth about our fallen human nature: we like to locate fault and blame outside ourselves. Jesus corrects this tendency, which is too often an excuse for ignoring our own need for conversion — our own need to produce good fruit.

Lent is a season dedicated to overcoming this “blame-shifting” tendency. It’s a season of self-reflection, repentance, and growth in our relationship with God. Our Lenten disciplines and practices give us a concrete opportunities to stop focusing on the perceived shortcomings of others, and to focus on making concrete acts of love and producing good fruit.

One discipline we’ve been focusing on this Lent is the practice of almsgiving. Being challenged to give to others doesn’t allow us to point fingers and highlight their shortcomings. It forces us to reflect on our own generosity and trust in the Lord. Rather than something scary, this should be a welcomed opportunity to be more fully converted to Christ. We have many concrete opportunities for almsgiving, including giving to our Annual Diocesan Appeal. Reread Christ’s parable about the fig tree and see what kind of good fruit he might be asking you to produce.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Jesus asks us to produce good fruit. One concrete opportunity to do so is to support our Annual Diocesan Appeal. Consider giving to this important cause as part of your Lenten almsgiving.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Farm photo

Text: “I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future.”

Copy: How are you cultivating your parish community today to prepare the Church for tomorrow? One way is by supporting our Annual Diocesan Appeal this Lenten season.