

## Prayers & Reflection for March

### **Text for Meditation** Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Moses said to the people: 'See, today I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I enjoin on you today, if you love the Lord your God and follow his ways, if you keep his commandments, his laws, his customs, you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to make your own. But if your heart strays, if you refuse to listen, if you let yourself be drawn into worshipping other gods and serving them, I tell you today, you will most certainly perish; you will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live in the love of the Lord your God, obeying his voice, clinging to him; for in this your life consists, and on this depends your long stay in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob he would give them.'

### **\*Responsorial Psalm** Ps 1:1-4, 6. (R) Ps 39:5

**Response** "Happy are those who have put their trust in the Lord"

1. Happy indeed are those who follow not the counsel of the wicked,  
nor linger in the way of sinners nor sit in the company of scorners,  
but whose delight is the law of the Lord  
and who ponder God's law day and night. **(R)**
2. They are like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters,  
that yields its fruit in due season  
and whose leaves shall never fade;  
and all that they do shall prosper. **(R)**
3. Not so are the wicked, not so!  
for they like winnowed chaff shall be driven away by the wind.  
for the Lord guards the way of the just  
but the way of the wicked leads to doom. **(R)**

### **Concluding Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you are the Way the Truth and the Life. Help us, at the start of each day, to recommit ourselves to following in your footsteps. 'May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.' (St Richard of Chichester)

\*Psalm text from Inclusive Language version (1993) of the Grail Psalter

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### **Reflection for March**

As we set out on our Lenten journey, the liturgy (for Thursday after Ash Wednesday) puts before us a choice between two roads to travel along – life and prosperity, death and disaster.

We may consider ourselves to be more sophisticated than the Israelites to whom this passage was originally addressed and not see things in such black and white terms as they did. The survival of God's chosen people depended on their fidelity to the covenant. They could not enter the Promised Land and possess it unless they adhered to the commandments given to them through Moses. It would be all too easy to be drawn into worshipping foreign gods, losing their unique identity and becoming merged within the cultures of the native tribes.

In some ways our situation is not dissimilar to theirs. We travel through an alien land on our way to our Eternal Home. The false gods of our age are subtle and just as difficult to resist. We may not have to overcome overt hostility but we are at risk of being sucked up into current value systems that seem so reasonable and tolerant yet mock religious faith and undermine Christian values of family life, responsible stewardship of the earth's resources, etc.

If this Lent we choose the path that leads to life by opening ourselves up to the love of God, clinging to him and trying to follow his ways, we have his promise that we will receive his blessings and fullness of life. We may not necessarily receive greater material prosperity but like the psalmist we will know delight, fruitfulness and sure-footedness that will not fade.

***Editor***