

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**CARING FOR FRAGILITY****In the Shadow of the Word**

“Then he told them this parable:

“A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

(Luke 13: 6 - 9)



For the fig tree to produce fruit one day opens a window of prophetic hope: God makes the wasteland bloom again (Is 27), rebuilds the ruins (Is 49:8); heals the wounds (Jer 30:17); like a potter, he remakes the broken vessels (Jer 18).

We listen to [Sanctus by Ola Gjeilo](#)

We open ourselves in silence to God's 'care', and in our prayer we include so many women and girls in the world who also need such care and 'rebuilding'. For many of them, various forms of violence prevent them from developing their capacities and threaten the fruitfulness of their lives.

We remember them in the many camps of displaced people, taking care of the children, making and distributing food in the camps, always encouraging with their presence, never giving up, and never tiring, as the ultimate example of a constant source of life that never disappoints.

Women who accompany us on our journey

Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, Anna, Elizabeth...

The beginning of their lives was marked by barrenness, which meant desolation, death, disgrace and humiliation in Israel.

Their stories reveal that they were lifted from their humiliating condition thanks to the intervention of God:

***The Lord gives the barren woman a home,
making her the joyous mother of children. (Ps. 113:9)***



The transformation of barrenness into fruitfulness is the paradox of the power of the weak, of the exaltation of the poor, of the fruitfulness of the abandoned. Its ultimate expression will be the 'scandal of the Cross', 'the weakness of God which is stronger than human strength'. (1 Cor 1:23).

Mary sings it in the Magnificat:

"He looked upon the humiliation of his handmaid";

her virginity represents the human being who does not rely on his/her own strength and which could be compared to the void over which the Spirit hovered in the beginning.

We listen to: [Magnificat of Margaret Rizza](#)

**We welcome the transforming action of the God who heals,
rebuilds, restores, forgives, makes the barren fruitful, and changes
tears into joy and mourning into dancing.**

We recall the experience lived in General Chapter of 2024:

"This experience, lived in the midst of an extraordinary world crisis and the painful situations of our people, led us into the desert, a place where we recognized our vulnerability and insecurity, a place of painful but also deep learning."

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