

Excerpts from the Spiritual Itinerary – Part 2: Retreat (4th day)

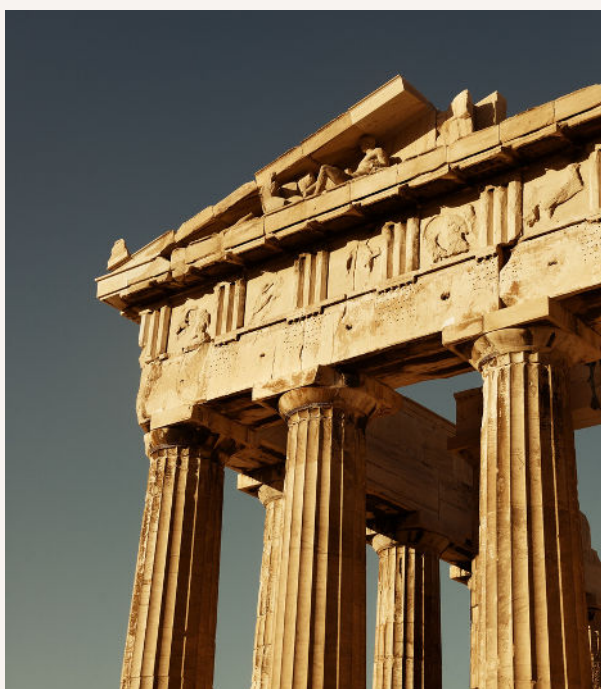
Third Sunday of Lent

We contemplate Jesus...

Those who were close to Jesus were witnesses to his absolute trust in the One he called Father. Jesus was familiar with the traditional symbols of his people to establish it: God was rock, refuge, defence, bulwark, fortress, wings... He inhabited the psalms and he made their expressions of trust his own: Jesus knew that neither the sun nor the moon could harm him because his Guardian did not sleep (*Ps 121:4*), God was on his side (*Ps 124:1*), he controlled his fate (*Ps 15:5*), and God was his support (*Ps 18:19*). When the nets of death closed in on Jesus, God would hear his cry for help (*Ps 18: 6*), He would enlarge his anguished heart (*Ps 25: 17*), God would change his mourning into dancing and clothe him with feasting (*Ps 30:12*). That is why Jesus allowed himself to be led by God, even through the dark glens of humble obedience. (*Ps 23:6*)

Jesus spoke of a God on our side, a God-with-us who desires our growth and vitality and asks only for our trusting surrender. We are not the fruit of chance, nor are we abandoned in the midst of the universe: we dwell in the centre of God's womb, and God's will for each one of us is to give us life and life in abundance.

We do not need to earn God's love because God sees us as a prodigious work of God's own hands, whose forgiveness is always awaiting us, just as a father and mother wait impatiently for their child who has gone away and run to meet them when they come home.



Believe in the Promise...

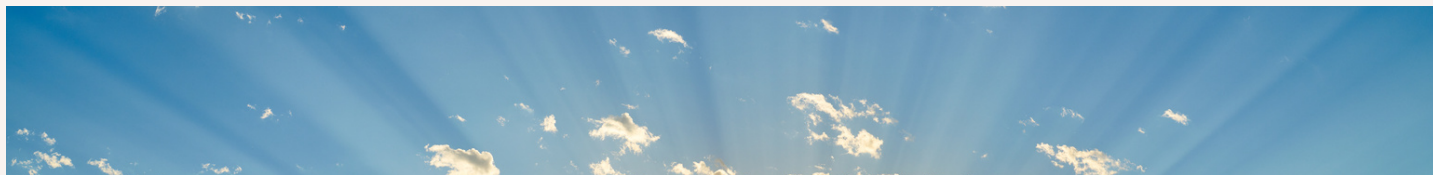
Excerpt from the Gospel

“Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” [...] After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name. (Jn 2: 19 – 23)

Our eyes are filled with images of "razed" temples and cities, to the point of becoming accustomed to them! This Gospel summons us to vigilance as we face the present. The shock of being a victim of violence or natural disaster is overwhelming. But once people have left, they stay in exile for an average of 17 years... Having patience is vital if we are to enter confidently into the promise of "a new day".

Song: [Wait for the Lord \(Taizé\)](#)

Wait for the Lord whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!



Prayer of intercession:

We remember Sophie...

Sophie also knew she needed confidence in the midst of difficulties: "I am obliged to remain like a ship buffeted by the winds that can neither go forward nor backward; thus I let myself be swayed by the will of God" (To Elise de Bouchaud 16-2-1853).

We can entrust to Him any particular discernment, or any complex situation in our world, and entrust ourselves to Him: "Father, thy will be done".

For all those who are on the margins of our societies, who are excluded... "So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God". (Eph. 2:19): "Father, may your will be done!"



"A temple destroyed, then rebuilt."

Lord, we entrust to you those who are working to preserve our common home.

Lord, enable us to realise that we are members of a new body, members of the body of Christ.

*We might place a few bricks on the floor.
Assemble them as you go along.*



Song: Taizé - [Taizé: Tu mecum es, nihil mihi deerit](#)

You are with me, I lack nothing. You are with me, I fear no evil.