

# The Living Word

**First Sunday of Lent, Year B**

**18 February 2024**

## **First Reading Gn 9:8-15**

*I will recall the covenant between myself and you...the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.*

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

## **Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 24:4-9. R. see v.10**

**(R.) Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.**

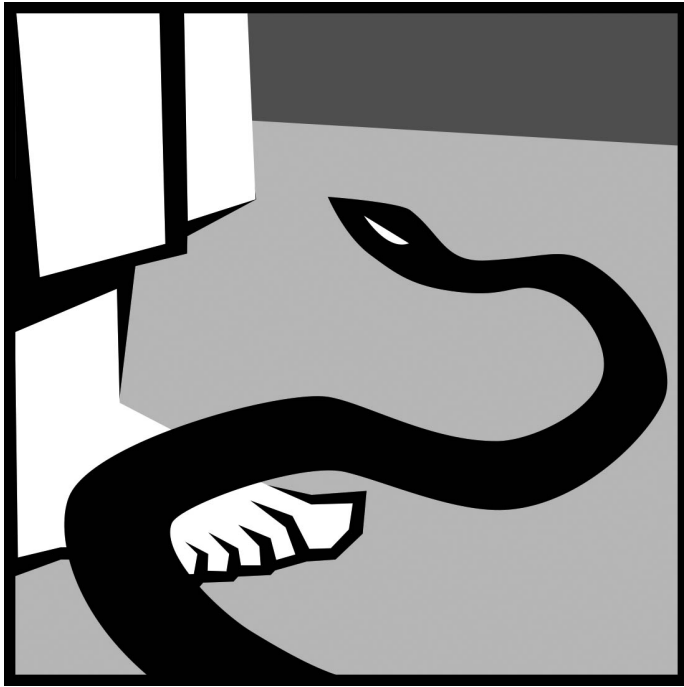
1. Lord, make me know your ways.  
Lord, teach me your paths.  
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:  
for you are God my saviour. (R.)

2. Remember your mercy, Lord,  
and the love you have shown from of old.  
In your love remember me,  
because of your goodness,  
O Lord. (R.)
3. The Lord is good and upright.  
He shows the path to those who stray,  
he guides the humble in the right path;  
he teaches his way to the poor. (R.)

## **Second Reading 1 Pt 3:18-22**

*The water of the flood is a type of the baptism which saves you now.*

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.



## **Reflection** by Fr Michael Tate

The Rainbow is God's signature to a treaty with humankind. On God's part, material forces will never be sent to annihilate human beings as a punishment for wrongdoing. On our part, as humans made in the likeness of God, we are to image God's rainbow relationship to nature.

This is the Divine Treaty basis of our responsibility for the environment. We undertake not to engage in practices or support policies which could severely damage the fragile ecology which supports life on our planet. The deforestation of the slopes of the Himalayas, leading to floods which kill thousands, is a catastrophic example.

And, gazing at the rainbow, we can pray for our planet, for the human beings and all other creatures who inhabit it, and quite often for ourselves at a deep personal level. For we know that, just as after a storm and dark clouds, light penetrates the misty sky and the beautiful bow of colour appears, the same phenomenon can occur in our own lives.

We could take a moment to pray that the rainbow will appear, perhaps for ourselves, perhaps for others we know who are going through a stormy time.

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### **Gospel Acclamation Mt 4:4**

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king  
of endless glory!*

*No one lives on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes from  
the mouth of God.*

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king  
of endless glory!*

### **Gospel Mk 1:12-15**

*He was tempted by Satan, and the angels looked after him.*

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

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