

31st March REFLECTION ON THE READINGS FOR MASS FIFTH
TUESDAY OF LENT

First Reading

Numbers 21:4-9

v.5 The Israelites spoke against God and against Moses ...
'Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness?'

v.7 And the people came to Moses and said, 'We have
sinned by speaking against the Lord. ... Intercede for us with
the Lord.'

Gospel Reading

Jn 8:21-30

v.23 Jesus went on, 'Yes, if you do not believe that I am He,
you will die in your sins....

v.28 When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will
know that I am He. ... what the Father has taught me is what I
preach ... v.29 for I always do what pleases him.'

v. 30 As he was saying this, many came to believe in him.

Reflection

Last Thursday, I suggested that Moses, seeing the people's
craven worship of an idol, took it upon himself to remind God
of his true nature, "Leave your burning wrath." (Ex 32: 12)
Confidence that the intercession of Moses can save the
people is another manifestation of the belief that the Lord
God is a God of kindness, full of compassion and mercy, who

hears Moses' prayer, whom he advises that he should raise up a brazen serpent to save them.

Jesus fulfils the function of the brazen serpent as protector of Israel in his teaching and his obedience to the will of his Father. In this tense confrontation with the upholders of the Law, Jesus states his unity with his Father.

His declaration leads many to believe!

Last Friday night in Rome, Pope Francis gave his blessing to the entire world. He reminded us that this pandemic is not the time of God's judgment, but the time when we should judge ourselves.

The first disciples, in the boat at the mercy of the storm (Mk 4:35-41), were buoyed up by God's gracious presence in Jesus asleep in the stern.

Many centres of the world's population are swamped at present by the Coronavirus.

We are the Body of Christ in the world of time and space.

Like our Master, we have a teaching to share that is Good News, especially at the Easter feasts, and, through our daily faithfulness, we judge ourselves by the same teaching.

Wrathful denunciations will barely register. Living in a way that shows that we 'always do what pleases (God)' may bring many to believe.

Collect prayer of today's Mass: *Grant us, O Lord, perseverance in doing your will, that in our day the people dedicated to your service may grow in both merit and number.*