

## REFLECTION ON THE READINGS FOR MASS FIFTH FRIDAY OF LENT

### First Reading

Jer 20:10-13

20:10 All those who were on good terms with me watched for my downfall, 'Perhaps he will be seduced into error. Then we shall get the better of him and take our revenge!'

20:11 But the Lord is at my side like a mighty hero;

20:13 Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of one in need from the clutches of evil doers.

### Gospel Reading

Jn 10:31-42

10:31 The Jews fetched stones to stone him,

10:32 so Jesus said to them, 'I have shown you many good works from my Father; for which of these are you stoning me?'

10:33 The Jews answered him, 'We are stoning you, not for doing a good work, but for blasphemy; though you are only a man, you claim to be God.'

10:34 Jesus answered: Is it not written in your Law: I said, you are gods? ...

10:38 At least believe in the work I do; then you will know for certain that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. ...

10:40 He went back again to the far side of the Jordan ...

10:41 Many people who came to him said, 'John gave no signs, but all he said about this man was true';

10:42 and many of them believed in him.

## Reflection

267 words

These verses of the gospel according to John come just before Jesus returns to Judaea, summoned by the sisters of Lazarus. He has taken refuge from his opponents on the far side of the Jordan, yet, made strong by his union with the Father, as the prophecy of Jeremiah foreshadows, he returns to face danger.

The Communion Antiphon of today's Mass cites 1 Peter 2:24 to interpret this deliberate choice that Jesus makes. "Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the cross, so that dead to sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds we have been healed."

Our experience of the pandemic is personal. For some, there is a continuing state of shock; for others, anxiety; for others still, an opportunity to grow in faith; others will have still other responses.

Even in the diminished manner in which we have to participate in the the Church's prayer at present, the liturgy leads us to a quiet place in our heart in order to contemplate the gift of our salvation in Christ.

Today, the utter freedom of his surrender to his Father is evident. He does not back off from his mission, while prudently going to a safer place. Soon, he will go back to Bethany, only two kilometres from Jerusalem where his enemies lie in wait. Jesus' friendship with Martha, Mary and Lazarus becomes the occasion of his obedience to his call that his works reveal the Father's glory. "Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God. ... Lazarus, come out!" (Jn 11: 40, 43)