



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

### Luke 13: 1-9

This Sunday's Gospel is a difficult one for children and adults alike, but it reveals to us how Jesus used current events to teach how God wants us to live in the world. These lessons, and the practice of looking at how God's teachings apply to current events, are still relevant today.

The first part of the Gospel responds to the then-held belief that bad things happen to bad people; that if something bad happened in your life, it was because you had sinned, and you were being punished. That's not quite the way it works, and not how God relates to us.

Explore today's migration crisis. Watch our animated video on forced migration at [devp.org/sharelent](http://devp.org/sharelent) and think about why people have had to flee their homes. Did these individuals cause the destruction and unsafety that made them leave? Are they being punished for something they did? Certainly not, yet they are living in extremely vulnerable circumstances with no certainty of when, or if, they will ever be able to go home. The first part of the Gospel tells us that we should not judge others or the reasons for their suffering. We should simply examine where we have failed to love ourselves, others, and God – wherever we see weakness and sin, we need to put energy into growing more in love.

God gave us free will. This means that we get to choose to follow God's way or our own way. But God made us so he knows what will bring us joy. And that's where the second part of the Gospel comes in. God is patient and will keep calling our name, just like the gardener who gave the fig tree another year to be nurtured and cared for.

God never promised us an easy life. He promised to be with us on the journey, and gave us a family and community to journey with. Do we join him on this journey by answering his call to love others?

When harm is occurring, we are called to respond with love, compassion and justice just as Jesus did. We are called now to Share the Journey with those who have been forced to leave their homes. This Lent, we invite you to pray for forced migrants and the communities that are receiving them, to walk in solidarity, and to consider sharing what you have with those in need.

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### Discussion questions:

- **Why do people have to flee their homes?**
- **How can we act in solidarity with those who are forced to flee their homes?**