

Friday 26 March

Today is Friday the 26 March, in the fifth week of Lent.

Luke Parker sings, 'In Quietness'.

Today's reading is from the Prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 20:10-13

For I hear many whispering:
 'Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!
 All my close friends
 are watching for me to stumble.
'Perhaps he can be enticed,
 and we can prevail against him,
 and take our revenge on him.'
But the Lord is with me like a dread warrior;
 therefore my persecutors will stumble,
 and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed,
 for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonour
 will never be forgotten.
O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous,
 you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
 for to you I have committed my cause.

Sing to the Lord;
 praise the Lord!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
 from the hands of evildoers.

One of the ways that the New Testament writers tried to understand Jesus was by comparing him with figures from the Hebrew Bible. In this passage Jeremiah is betrayed by friends, as Jesus was. What in your experience helps you to know what this is like?

Jeremiah remains confident that God is with him, even when the outlook seems bleak. Is that, too, part of the way that you yourself have experienced God? What gave you that confidence?

“The Lord is with me like a dread warrior”, says Jeremiah. This may well not be your normal image of what God is like! But what does speak to you of the strength of God?

As you listen again, notice the echoes between this passage, and the Passion of Jesus that we will be marking next week.

The passage ends with praise of God. Perhaps you might end this prayer by joining in with that praise.

You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.