

March 23, 2017

Jeremiah 7:23-28

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Luke 11:14-23

In today's first reading from the Prophet Jeremiah the Lord says to the Israelites, "Listen to my voice." We are called to listen to the voice of the Lord, but really we are called to do more. Children "listen" to the voice of their parents – that is they "hear" what their parents say – but then they often go and do what they want, even when what they want is contrary to what their parents told them to do. We often do the same thing. We listen to the voice of the Lord, but then go and do what we want, not what the Lord calls us to do. We are like the Hebrew people who, as we hear in the Responsorial Psalm today, hardened their hearts to the voice of the Lord even though they witnessed what God did for them during the 40 years in the wilderness.

Lent is a time for us to listen to God, to really listen. It is a time for us to hear what the Lord says to us and to follow the way he calls us to follow. The choice is ours. We can listen to the voice of the Lord and follow it, or we can hear what God says and then do what we want, even when what we want it is contrary to what God calls us to do. We can choose God or we can choose that which is not God. Remember what Jesus tells us in the Gospel for today, "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters." Lent is a time for us to reflect on what we want to do: we can gather with the Lord or we can scatter. The choice is ours.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. When are the times you have heard the voice of God in Scripture but have not listened?
2. How do we demonstrate that we will gather with the Lord and not scatter?
3. What can we do this Lent to show that we choose God and not that which is not God?

*Reflection by Deacon John Bacon, Holy Name Parish, Cedar Lake.*