

**DEACON TONY'S MARCH 10TH HOMILY
FOR THE
4TH SUNDAY IN LENT**

Do you know what the three "R's" are? ?? It has a lot to do with education. We see in the first reading from 2 Chronicles, that early and open God sent His messengers to warn the people about keeping a good relationship with Him.

That is the first "R" and it stands for REBELLION.

They were overtaken by the Babylonians who destroyed the Temple and all the precious objects of their worship and carried the survivors back to Babylon to be slaves. They remained in captivity for 70 years, but God kept His eye on them.

He waited for them to show **signs of REPENTANCE which is the second "R" in God's educational curriculum.**

The total time of repentance was 70 years.

When Persia defeated Babylon, they brought about a whole new way to rule conquered people. They were not threatened by other's religious practices and believed that the conquered people should worship as their God demanded. Therefore, God inspired Cyrus, the King of Persia, to proclaim a release of the Jews who wished, to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple.

Thus, the third "R" is RESORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

As it says in the reading, the Lord had to do this often. But God does these things out of love for His children.

God provides the GIFT of faith which He gives freely. It cannot be earned by any works that we do. It is totally a free gift that comes from His generosity.

Our Gospel has another story where God had to teach His children the meaning of love. There were many times when Moses' people grew impatient with God and from their pride, complained to Moses that God had brought them to the desert to die.

God decided to teach the people about how bad they could have it. He sent seraphim serpents in answer to their complaints.

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Some of the people died from being bitten by the snakes. So, the Lord said to Moses, MAKE A SNAKE AND MOUNT IT ON A POLE. ANYONE WHO IS BITTEN CAN LOOK AT IT AND LIVE. SO, MOSES MADE A BRONZE SNAKE AND MOUNT IT ON A POLE.

THEN WHEN ANYONE WAS BITTEN BY A SNAKE AND LOOKED AT THE BRONZE SNAKE, LIVED.

So too must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that all who ponder on Our Lord's crucifixion, and believe that He died for our sins, will enjoy eternal life with Him.