

# Sunday Message

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year A • 22 February 2026 • Psalter Week 1



## JESUS IS TESTED IN THE WILDERNESS

MATTHEW 4:1-11

After His baptism, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where He faces three serious temptations by the devil. This time alone tests His commitment and faithfulness to God.

Each temptation challenges Jesus to misuse His power or trust in things other than God. The devil first tempts Him to turn stones into bread, appealing to physical hunger. Jesus responds by quoting scripture, showing that true life depends on trusting God, not just satisfying our immediate needs.

Next, the devil offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if He will worship him. Jesus refuses, affirming that worship belongs to God alone.

Finally, the devil tempts Jesus to throw Himself down from the Temple, expecting God to save Him miraculously. Jesus again resists, relying on scripture and trusting God's plan without testing Him.

This story shows us Jesus' perfect obedience and trust in God, even in difficult times. It reminds us that temptation is real but can be overcome by faith, prayer, and God's Word.

We learn from Jesus that true strength comes from God, not from giving in to immediate desires or shortcuts. ■

## REFLECT

Jesus' journey into the wilderness shows us a powerful example of faith and trust in God. After His baptism, He is led by the Spirit into a lonely place, where He faces temptations that challenge His mission and identity.

Each temptation Jesus faces is a choice: to rely on Himself or to trust God. The devil tries to tempt Him with bread to satisfy hunger, with power over the kingdoms of the world, and with testing God's protection. But Jesus refuses to take the easy way out. Instead, He stands firm by quoting scripture, showing us the strength that comes from knowing and trusting God's Word.

We all face temptations – moments when it's easier to give in to quick fixes, shortcuts, or selfish desires. Jesus' example teaches us that faith and obedience to God give us the strength to resist.

When life feels hard or uncertain, we can turn to God's Word and Spirit for guidance and strength, just as Jesus did. We don't have to face our struggles alone.

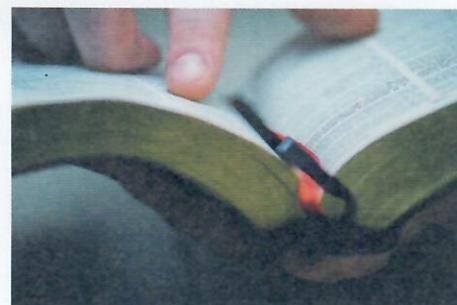
Today, ask yourself: How can I deepen my trust in God when I face challenges? Where can I turn to in God's Word for strength and guidance? ■

## LEARN

"The Lord was tempted in all things as we are, but without sin. He shows us that by relying on the word of God, we can overcome the devil's lies and temptations. Our strength is not in ourselves, but in God's truth, which must guide our hearts and actions."  
(St Augustine)

## DO

Set aside a few minutes each day to read a short passage from scripture and quietly reflect on it. Let God's Word strengthen you to face daily challenges with faith and calm.



## SAY

Lord God,  
You showed us through your Son Jesus that temptation can be overcome by trusting in your Word.  
Help me to follow His example – to rely not on my own strength, but on your truth and grace.  
When I face struggles and challenges, remind me to turn to scripture and prayer for strength.  
Fill my heart with faith, so I may walk always in your light.  
Amen.



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*When he calls on me, I will answer him;  
I will deliver him and give him glory,  
I will grant him length of days.*

**COLLECT**

Grant, almighty God,  
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,  
that we may grow in understanding  
of the riches hidden in Christ  
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects... **Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

The LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 51(50):3-4, 5-6b, 12-13, 14, 17.  
R. cf. 3a

**R: Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

1. Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your merciful love;  
according to your great compassion,  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me completely from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin. **R.**
2. My transgressions, truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done. **R.**
3. Create a pure heart for me, O God;  
renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence;  
take not your holy spirit from me. **R.**
4. Restore in me the joy of your salvation;  
sustain in me a willing spirit.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. **R.**

**SECOND READING** Romans 5:12-19

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

*(for shorter form read between > <)*

> Brothers and sisters: Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned — <

for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.

> For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man; much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God. <**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL** Matthew 4:4b

**R: Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

**R: Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

**GOSPEL** Matthew 4:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."'

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."' Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Give us the right dispositions, O Lord, we pray,  
to make these offerings,  
for with them we celebrate the beginning  
of this venerable and sacred time... **Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.*

Or

*The Lord will conceal you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will trust.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Renewed now with heavenly bread,  
by which faith is nourished, hope increased,  
and charity strengthened,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that we may learn to hunger for Christ,  
the true and living Bread,  
and strive to live by every word  
which proceeds from your mouth... **Amen.**