



The Catholic Community of Divine Savior

# Family Faith Focus

Volume 9, Issue 30

February 21, 2021

## Dates to Remember

- February 20:  
4:00 PM Mass
- February 21:  
9:00 AM Mass
- Please see our parish website for reservation information and links to view Sunday or weekday Masses online.

## Act of Contrition

My God,  
I am sorry for my sins  
with all my heart.  
In choosing to do  
wrong and failing to do  
good,  
I have sinned against  
you whom I should love  
above all things.  
I firmly intend, with  
your help,  
to do penance,  
to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever  
leads me to sin.  
Our Savior Jesus Christ  
suffered and died for us.  
In his name, my God,  
have mercy. Amen.

## First Sunday of Lent

## Mark 1: 12-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert,  
and he remained in the desert for forty days,  
tempted by Satan.

He was among wild beasts,  
and the angels ministered to him.

After John had been arrested,  
Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God:  
“This is the time of fulfillment.  
The kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Sunday Gospel Connection: February 21, 2021

### The First Sunday of Lent, Cycle B

## Mark 1: 12-15

**Gospel Background:** On the first Sunday of Lent, the Gospel reading in each Lectionary cycle is about Jesus' temptation in the desert. This event in the life of Jesus is reported in each of the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—but it is not found in John's Gospel. This year we read Mark's account of this event.



Compared to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the details throughout Mark's narrative are sparse. This is evident in Mark's account of Jesus' temptation in the desert. Mark tells us only that Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit and that for 40 days he was tempted by Satan. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke explain that Jesus fasted while in the desert, that Satan presented him with three temptations, and that Jesus refused each one, quoting Scripture. Only the Gospels of Matthew and Mark report that angels ministered to Jesus at the end of his time in the desert.

*(Continued on pg. 2)*

*(Continued from pg. 1)*

In each of the Synoptic Gospels, the temptation of Jesus follows his baptism by John the Baptist. In Mark's Gospel, we are told that Jesus went into the desert immediately after his baptism, led by the Spirit. Jesus' public ministry in Galilee begins after his temptation in the desert. Mark's Gospel makes a connection between the arrest of John the Baptist and the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of God is in continuity with the preaching of John the Baptist, but it is also something new. As Jesus announces it, the Kingdom of God is beginning; the time of the fulfillment of God's promises is here.



The fact that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert is significant. This recalls the 40 years that the Israelites wandered in the desert after being led from slavery in Egypt. The prophet Elijah also journeyed in the desert for 40 days and nights, making his way to Horeb, the mountain of God, where he was also attended to by an angel of the Lord. Remembering the significance of these events, we also set aside 40 days for the season of Lent.

In Mark's Gospel, the desert marks beginning of Jesus' battle with Satan; the ultimate test will be in Jesus' final hours on the cross. In a similar way, our Lenten observances are only a beginning, a preparation for and a reinforcement of our ongoing struggle to resist the temptations we face in our lives. During Lent, we are led by the Holy Spirit to remember the vows of Baptism in which we promised to reject sin and to follow Jesus. Just as Jesus was ministered to by the angels, God also supports us in our struggle against sin and temptation. We succeed because Jesus conquered sin once and for all in his saving death on the cross.

**Family Connection:** The announcement that Jesus makes as he begins his preaching in today's Gospel is recalled on Ash Wednesday at the signing with ashes: "Repent and believe in the gospel." This is our challenge for Lent; indeed, it is the challenge of our entire life. During Lent, we are invited to strengthen and to renew the promises that we made at our Baptism, to reject Satan and sin so as to live as children of God. Through the grace of God that we received at Baptism, we follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and know that with Jesus' help, we will be victorious over sin.

As you gather as a family, talk about the importance of Baptism. At our Baptism, our sins were forgiven, and we promised to live as children of God. As part of the Rite of Baptism, we rejected sin and Satan. Read today's Gospel, Mark 1:12-15. During Lent, we renew the promises of our Baptism, turning again from sin and promising to follow God. Light a candle, perhaps a candle used at one of your family member's Baptisms, and pray together the Act of Contrition. *(See pg. 1)*

For more information and Sunday Connection resources visit:

**LOYOLA PRESS.**  
A JESUIT MINISTRY

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/first-sunday-of-lent-cycle-b-sunday-connection/>

## Missionary Childhood Association — Lenten Almsgiving

The Missionary Childhood Association (formerly the Holy Childhood Association) is one of the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Universal Church. Begun in France in 1843 by Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson, the MCA today continues Bishop Forbin-Janson's vision of "children helping children" in the poorest places in our world through their prayers and financial sacrifices.

Each year our FCFF students are encouraged to practice the discipline of almsgiving or charity during the season of Lent. Unfortunately, this year we are not able to distribute the mission banks provided by the Missionary Childhood

Association, but we hope that our FCFF children will still continue participating in this Lenten almsgiving program. Perhaps you and your children can make your own mission bank this year or designate a container that you have as a mission bank for your children's offerings for the MCA.

While there is no obligation to participate in this Lenten almsgiving program, we encourage our students to participate generously again this year and to pray for children throughout the world who are less fortunate.

**MCA Lenten Almsgiving Donations may be returned to the parish office anytime during Holy Week, March 28 – April 3, or during Easter Week, April 4 - 10.** We are very proud of how generous our children and young persons continue to be each year in their mission bank almsgiving. Even with the pandemic that began during Lent last year, we were still able to send a check in the amount of \$200.37 to the Missionary Childhood Association. We are grateful to all who participated!

### From Pope Francis' Lenten Message for 2021:

*To experience Lent with love* means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord's word to his Servant, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you" (Is 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters.

"Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 187).

Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father.

May Mary, Mother of the Saviour, ever faithful at the foot of the cross and in the heart of the Church, sustain us with her loving presence. May the blessing of the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey towards the light of Easter.



# FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



## Guide us, Lord

Lord,  
you brought salvation to Noah through  
the waters  
and carried him through his time of trial  
to a covenant of love.  
All times and all seasons belong to you.  
As we now begin this time, this season,

our time of trial,  
stay close to us.  
Carry us through our temptations.  
Remove all that keeps us apart from you.  
Lead us by the right paths  
so that we may live in the light of your love.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, February 21, 2021**

**Forty Days**



*Today's readings: Genesis 9:8–15; Psalm 25:4–5, 6–7, 8–9; 1 Peter 3:18–22; Mark 1:12–15.* After Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, the Spirit drove him out into the desert, where he experienced temptation. Sometimes we fail to consider that, in the incarnation, Jesus took on every bit of the human experience, except sin. He knew what it was to be tempted, to face trials.

In the Bible, the number *forty* symbolizes a time of trial or testing. In today's readings, Jesus' forty days in the desert are placed alongside the experience of Noah and his family, the forty days of the flood. Neither reading leaves us in a time of trial. In the reading from Genesis, we see the rainbow, the sign of God's covenant with Noah. In Mark, we

hear Jesus proclaim that the kingdom of God is at hand, the time for which they have been awaiting has come. At the very beginning of our season of preparation, we hear proclaimed the fruits that await us at its conclusion.

In this season of Lent, we have forty days to confront our temptations. We hear Jesus calling us to repent and believe in the Gospel. How might we use these forty days to ready ourselves to hear the proclamation at its end? What must I repent of so that I may better believe? This week, think about obstacles that hold you back from God's love. Consider your temptations. How can you use this season to make yourself ready for what is to come?



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, February 22

#### Feast of the Chair of St. Peter

The people who surrounded Jesus often wondered about his identity. He healed the sick, forgave sins, preached the coming of the kingdom of God. Walking alongside him, seeing all that he did, Peter must have wondered about this question too. When Jesus asks, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answers readily: Jesus is the Messiah, the one for whom all Israel has been waiting. Jesus founds the Church on Peter’s proclamation. What is your response to the query “Who do you say that Jesus is?” *Today’s readings: 1 Peter 5:1–4; Psalm 23:1–3a, 4, 5, 6; Matthew 16:13–19.*

### Tuesday, February 23

#### The Lord’s Prayer

When we step back to consider the prayer that Jesus taught and we memorized long ago, the challenge of the Lord’s Prayer is seen in a new way. In saying “thy kingdom come,” we long for God’s kingdom of justice and righteousness. But are we anxious to do God’s will, so that it is done on earth as it is in heaven? Do we forgive, even as we long to be forgiven? Take some time to meditate over each line of the prayer, perhaps writing each line and journaling with it. What might God be calling you to, as you reflect on the prayer that Jesus taught? *Today’s readings: Isaiah 55:10–11; Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19; Matthew 6:7–15.*

### Wednesday, February 24

#### Turn Away from Sin

After his sojourn in the belly of the fish, Jonah traveled to Nineveh as God commanded. Upon hearing Jonah call them to repentance, the Ninevites changed their lives. It is tempting to seek big signs, but the call to conversion is daily. How can you reorient your life toward God today? How can you turn away from those things that are holding you back from his love? *Today’s readings: Jonah 3:1–10; Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 18–19; Luke 11:29–32.*

### Thursday, February 25

#### Ask, Seek, Knock

In today’s Gospel we are told to ask, to seek, to knock. Does this mean that God will give us our every desire? From both reason and experience, we know that sometimes we want things that are not good for us. Yet we are called to bring our needs and desires before God, who desires every good thing for us. What need can you entrust to God? How might giving it over to God transform its role in your life? *Today’s readings: Esther C:12, 14–16, 23–25; Psalm 138:1–2ab, 2cde–3, 7c–8; Matthew 7:7–12.*

### Friday, February 26

#### Go First and Be Reconciled

Jesus’ words about anger are challenging. Anger can come upon us easily, and sometimes we allow that emotion to govern our actions. But Jesus teaches another way. He says that before we bring our gift to the altar, we must go and be reconciled with the one we have wronged. How hard it is to admit we have made a mistake! Apologize to someone you have hurt and seek out the sacrament of reconciliation this week. *Today’s readings: Ezra 18:21–28; Psalm 130:1–2, 3–4, 5–7a, 7bc–8; Matthew 5:20–26.*

### Saturday, February 27

#### Love Your Enemies

Jesus’ instructions to love our enemies and pray for persecutors are familiar, yet somehow these instructions never fail to cause discomfort. Love our enemies? Pray for those who persecute us? Our natural inclination is to hurt those who have hurt us, to return actions in kind. Jesus holds us to a standard that seems impossible. This week, consider a person who has hurt you. Say one Hail Mary for that person and then another. As Mother Teresa said, prayer changes me and I change things. See what happens when you entrust that person to God. *Today’s readings: Deuteronomy 26:16–19; Psalm 119:1–2, 4–5, 7–8; Matthew 5:43–48.*

