



March 9, 2025

First Sunday of Lent

Dt 26:4-10 | Rom 10:8-13 | Lk 4:1-13

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

We've all seen it: the standard cartoon sketch in which the main character, faced with a decision, imagines the devil coaxing him toward evil on one shoulder while an angel encourages him toward good on the other. Lighthearted though they are, these classic scenes are the product of Biblical wisdom and millennia of human experience. In fact, the Garden of Eden provided the prototype: Eve was the first to listen to Satan in a conversation that was disastrous for her and her descendants. It is no coincidence that, in today's Gospel, Jesus finds himself in a desert – the “opposite” of a garden, so to speak – where he, too, confronts the devil. But note Jesus' response to Satan's advances: the Incarnate Word of God neither barter nor argues from human wisdom. For no amount of time does he turn over Satan's proposals in his heart. Instead, Jesus rejects the temptations immediately and relies on the power of the Word of God to put the devil in his place.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

The Lenten season is meant to be a “desert” in which we, like Jesus, confront temptation. It is not a self-improvement program; it is an opportunity to reject sins, habits, and attitudes which keep us distant from God so that we can give a wholehearted “yes” to his plan for our lives. But the scene from today's Gospel is offered on the first Sunday of Lent to remind us that we do not go into the desert alone. Jesus entered first to show us that he would be with us every time we are tempted. If, instead of giving Satan airtime, we stay close to Jesus (in prayer and by frequenting the sacraments) and immerse ourselves in the Word of God (by reading Scripture), we, like him, will draw our strength from God. We will emerge victorious because, as St. Paul reminds us, “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,” and, “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

PLAN

Have you made a Lenten plan yet? If not, the time is now! Don't be afraid to be generous with God. Remember the three pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Could you add a daily Mass or Rosary to your schedule? Could you incorporate some form of self-denial into your weekly meal plan or media consumption? Once you've worked out a plan, offer it to God and ask him to bless your efforts to grow in virtue out of love for him.