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Year A 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

Sunday Mass Readings

FIRST READING:

Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Psalm 50(51): 3-6, 12-14, 17

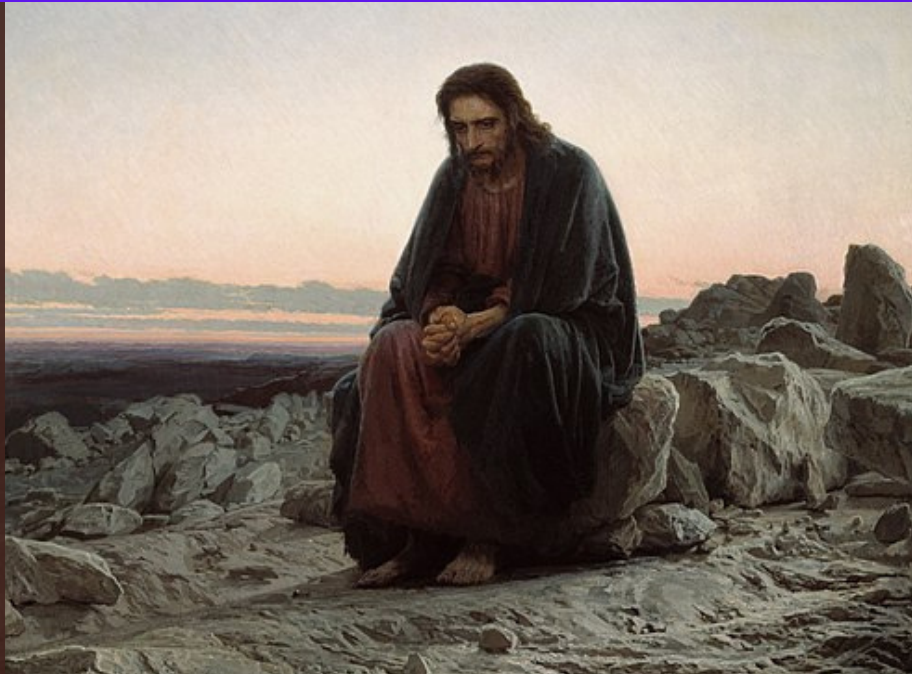
SECOND READING:

Romans 5:12-19

GOSPEL:

Matthew 4:1-11

"You must worship the Lord your God, and serve Him alone."



Ivan Kramskoi, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) on the readings for children.

Pray

- In the Gospel today we hear the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- What areas of temptation do you struggle with? Do you find yourself getting disillusioned or deflated by your struggle? Are you lacking the will-power to resist those struggles?
- Bring those struggles to Jesus. You may find it helpful to journal your thoughts, to name your struggles on paper. Spend some time looking objectively at concrete areas for improvement, and then invite Jesus into those situations rather than turning them over in your mind. Ask for His grace and strength to fight the good fight each day, one day at a time.

Talk

In today's Gospel Jesus is tempted in the desert before beginning His mission.

- What kind of things are we tempted to do that we know are wrong? (Think about school, home, with our friends)
- Who or what can help us overcome those temptations and not give into them?
- Look at today's Gospel again: what temptations did Jesus face? How did He respond to them?
- The Word of God is so powerful in our lives to help us overcome temptation. What Scripture passages or stories come to mind that could be helpful to call on in times you are tempted?

Family Challenge!

Jesus emphasises the power of the Word of God in today's Gospel. This Lent, make sure you have either a Bible or a weekly Bible quote in a prominent place in your home. You could set up a Lenten display area: ideas here on www.catholicicing.com

GOD ALONE IS GOD

In each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew, and Luke), after Jesus' baptism by John, Jesus is reported to have gone to the desert to fast and pray for 40 days. In each case, while in the desert, Jesus is tempted by the devil.

Matthew and Luke give more detail than Mark does, but each one tells how the devil tempts Jesus in the desert. In Matthew, as in Luke, the devil presents three temptations to Jesus. The devil tempts Jesus to use his power to appease his hunger; he tempts Jesus to put God's promise of protection to the test; and he offers Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship the devil. In each case, Jesus resists the temptation, rebuking the devil with words from Scripture.

The account of Jesus' temptation in the desert is filled with allusions and parallels to the Old Testament, including the story of the people of Israel. The Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert in Exodus, for example, and Jesus spends 40 days in the desert. As the Israelites were tempted during the Exodus, so too is Jesus tempted.

Each temptation offers insight into both God and the human condition. Jesus' rejection of the temptations shows that he will not put God to the test. Grounding himself on the word and authority of Scripture, Jesus rebukes the devil, confident in God's protection and faithfulness.

As we start our journey through Lent, our Sunday readings call us to adopt the same confidence that Jesus had in the face of temptation: God's word alone will suffice; God's promise of protection can be trusted; God alone is God.

Loyola Press Sunday Connection

CHECK IT OUT: RADIO MARIA IRELAND



- Radio Maria Ireland operates as a not-for-profit, non-commercial, internet-streaming radio station. Their mission is to help communicate God's divine love and mercy for all mankind through the teachings and sacraments of the Catholic Church.
- The station offers a full daily program and can be accessed by mobile app or by phone (Listen Live Line 01 4373277).
- You can also tune in to Radio Maria Ireland on SAORVIEW Channel 210



*"I want eternity. I was born for greater things."
St Stanislaus*

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

Before Jesus began His great public ministry, He spent forty days fasting and praying in the desert. We read this Gospel at the beginning of Lent to remind us to prepare our hearts for the great season of Easter at the end of forty(ish) days. Lent is a time to focus particularly on prayer, fasting and almsgiving; a time to purify our hearts and minds of anything that is not drawing us closer to Christ, anything that is an obstacle on our path to heaven. Jesus Himself was tempted by the devil with power, with fame, and with satisfying His own material desires, basically to replace His worship of the Father and doing the Father's will with lesser things. God the Father's plan for Jesus was that He would have His hunger satisfied through doing God's Will, that He would be raised up from the earth and draw all to Him, that He would be recognised as King of kings, Lord of all, and that He would suffer His passion and death in order to bring salvation to the world - there was no greater plan! When we are tempted, we need to be able to keep the bigger picture in mind: is this part of God's plan for my happiness? What greater good am I fighting for? There is no temptation we cannot overcome through His grace and strength - and the reward is out of this world!

Take some time this week to reflect on how you deal with temptations that come your way. Look especially at what you fill your head and heart with each day: through the conversations you have, what you listen to and watch, where you allow your thoughts to drift. What needs to change? Make a concrete resolution, even just to combat one thing!

[How to Face Temptation \(Fr Mike Schmitz\)](#)

[I need Thee every hour - Jars of Clay](#)

[Check out our To the Heights Youth Newsletter](#)



Family Prayer

*Lord Jesus, teach us to rely on
You alone, to trust in Your word
and Your protection. Amen*

EVENTS

"Cherished Evening" for women aged 18-50 at Holy Family Mission, March 6th. Rosary @7.30pm, Mass @8pm followed by tea and chat. (first Monday of every month) www.holyfamilymission.ie

Encounter: gathering for young adults aged 18-35 in St John's Church, Waterford, Fri 10th March, 8pm, Talk - Music - Prayer - Refreshments. Free Admission. More info: www.waterfordlismore.ie

Retreat for Men at Holy Family Mission, April 28 - 30. Main speaker Fr Philip Mulryne OP (former Man Utd player). €250 full board accomm. More info: (052) 6133181 / info@holyfamilymission.ie

Arise Family Conference at Tramore, Co. Waterford, April 10 - 13. Workshops, Guest Speakers, Fun & Activities, Sacrament. For more information check out www.arisefamilyconference.ie

Men's Prayer Group:

St Saviour's Church, Bridge Street, Waterford City. Every Wednesday evening, starts at 7pm: Exposition, Benediction, Faith Formation and Group Sharing. Led by the Servant Priests of the Home of the Mother

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- Faith@Home Newsletter (faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie)
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WEEKLY
WEEKLY
FORTNIGHTLY

