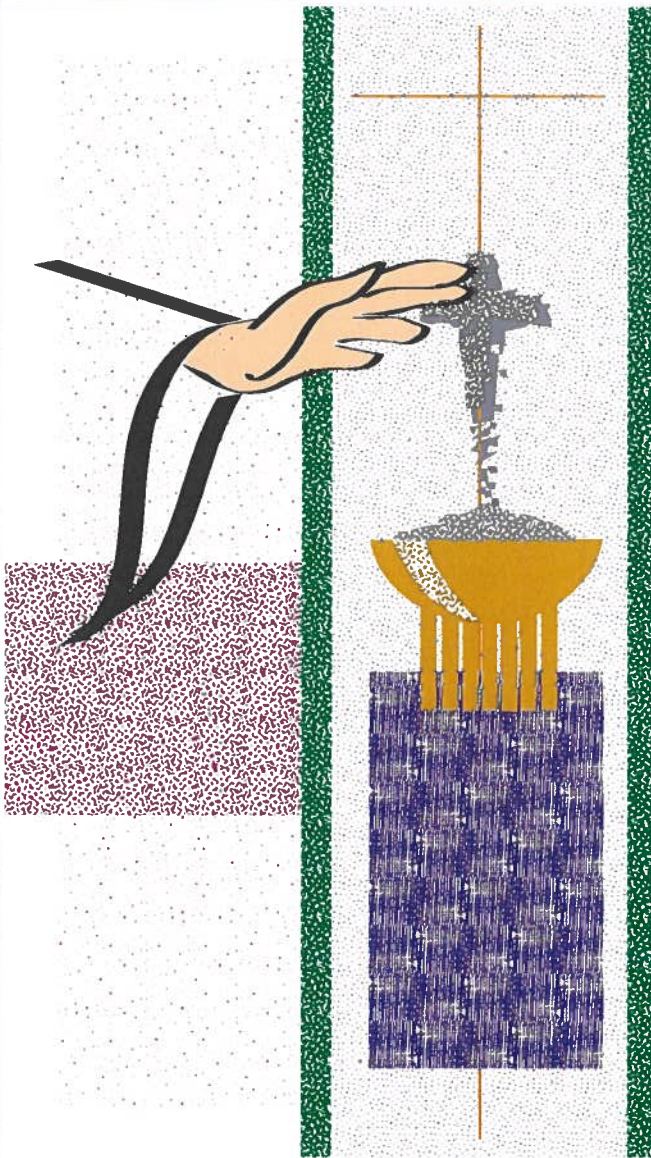


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

MARCH 8-9, 2025

An illustration featuring a hand holding a cross over a chalice. The hand is positioned on the left, with the index finger pointing towards the cross. The cross is a simple wooden structure. Below the cross is a golden chalice with a blue base. The background is a light, textured surface with two vertical green stripes. The text is arranged to the right of the illustration.

The same LORD
is LORD of all.
Everyone who
calls upon the
name of the
LORD
will be saved.

**THE SEASON
OF LENT**

You who dwell
in the shelter
of the Most High,
no evil shall befall you,
for to his angels he has
given command about
you that they guard you
in all your ways.

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Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 5:00 pm	Sun. 10:30 am
Sacred Heart	Sun. 7:30 am	
St. James	Sun. 9:00 am	

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 4:15 pm
Sacred Heart	Sun. 7:05-7:20 am
St. James	Sun. 8:35-8:50 am

Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable: "During this sacred season, let us look upon ourselves as on the Mount with Jesus—learning his love and his fear—unlearning ourselves, and growing up unto him." ~Saint John Henry Newman

Second Sunday of Lent			March 15-16, 2025	
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, March 15 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, March 16 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, March 16 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, March 16 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron Neitzke Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Neitzke Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Neitzke Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Neitzke Deacon Ron
Ushers	Gery Wright Bob Schultz Dan Hoffman Dave Emling	Dennis Pankey Kyle Ferris	Dallas Ferris Bob Buente Jeff Steinke Jerry Ogrentz	Joe Smolkovich Kim Smicker Wayne Bisailon Brent Fulton
Lector	Bobbi Buza	Terri Weakley	Jeff O'Connor	Steve Jacob
Eucharistic Minister				Susan Riordan
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Donna Bernicky R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	Wayne Bisailon

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, March 10 (SMM)
8:00 am +JR Matern (Janet Andrzejewski)

Tuesday, March 11 (SH)
8:00 am +Tom Buckley (Bill O'Brien Family)

Wednesday, March 12 (SJ)
8:00 am (SJ) Virginia Fritz (Jerry/JoLynn Ogrentz)

Friday, March 14 (SMM)
8:00 am +Vicki Webber (Joe/Rhonda Berns)

Saturday, March 15 (SMM)
5:00 pm +Madonna Hoffman (Velma Murphy)
+JR Matern (Tim Buckley)

Sunday, March 16

7:30 am (SH) +Duane Ferris (Franciis/Kathy Legacy)
+Inez Crawford (Sara, Jan., Mike, & Jacob)

9:00am (SJ) +Duane Ferris (Dallas Ferris Family)
+Pat Perreault (Ken/Denise Wenzelman)

10:30 am (SMM) All The Parish Family

A Look Ahead

Sunday March 9—St. James Spring Forward Donut Breakfast following the 9:00 Mass
Thursday, March 11—SH CCW meeting 6:30 pm
March 29/30—2nd Collection for Catholic Relief Services
Thursday, April 10- Night in Italy—SMM
Thursday, April 24—SH Spring Luncheon

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550
 Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com
 Home—815-933-4077
 Parish Email – smm_sja_sh@yahoo.com
 TriParish web page – www.triparishcatholics.org
 Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities
Tri Parish Church office –Barb Riker 426-2550
 Julie Bisailon 426-2550

Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550
 debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education –
 St. MM – Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com
 Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015
 St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com
Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—
 SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 Jdstreeffarms@aol.com
 St. James— Mary Offerman—602-670-8888 (call or text)
 Sacred Heart-Marilyn Pfeiffer 815-955-8246 (call or text)
 Terri Weakley— 815-514-8171

Question of the Week During this Jubilee Year of Hope, what or who sustains me in hope through periods of trial?

Collections Weekend of March 1-2, 2025

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,773

St. James—\$2,985

Sacred Heart—\$1,300

Thank you for your generosity!

LENTEN STATIONS OF THE CROSS SERVICES

Wed. March 12th, 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SJ

Friday, March 14th Stations of the Cross 3PM SJ

Wed. March 19th, Scriptural Stations of the Cross 7PM SMM

Friday, March 21st Stations of the Cross 3:00 SMM

*Please note, when Stations are held at SMM plan on being here 10-15 minutes early to avoid school traffic.

Wed. April 2nd 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SJ

Friday, April 4th Stations of the Cross 3:00 SJ

Wed. April 9th, 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SMM

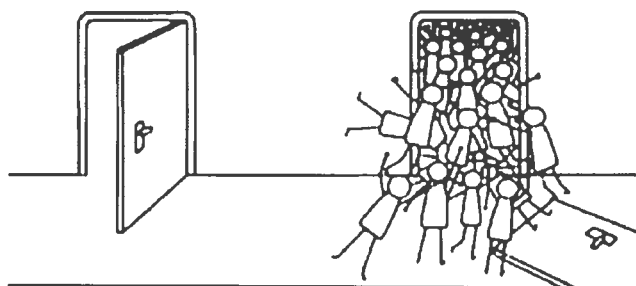
Friday, April 11th Stations of the Cross 3:00 SMM



Welcome into the faith to
Lucan Anthony Weidner
son of Jessica Manzella and Mark Weidner
who was baptized at St. Margaret Mary
on February 23, 2025

**SUNDAY MASS
(OBLIGATORY)**

**ASH WEDNESDAY
(OPTIONAL)**



Reflections

The church expects much from its members, even though we tend to dodge our duty. The basic sin that is ever before us and does so easily beset us is selfishness. When the church faces us with Christ's expectations, we are prone to say, "Leave us alone." But the church cannot leave us alone because the church is the body of Christ and its business is to do what he did when he was here in the body.

His expectations are summed up in the following commands and promises: Love and give and you shall live and the world shall have hope. "Give — give — give, that's all I ever hear around here," said an irked church member. And another replied, "As long as the church is the church that's all you will ever hear, for Christ expects his followers to be so committed to him that they will give time, thought, energy, talents, and life to meet the needs of the world. You shall have what your faith expects."

Leave Us Alone

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary

- ⇒ There are ballots for the CCW Woman of the Year in the back of the church. Please write down the woman you feel is deserving of this honor and place it in the box.
- ⇒ **IMPORTANT CCW** meeting to discuss the upcoming Night in Italy fundraiser will be on Monday, March 10 at 7pm. All women of the parish are encouraged to attend.
- ⇒ Please watch for details on the Night In Italy 2025. It will be held on Thursday, April 10th. Sign up sheet for volunteers and food donations in back of the church.

St. James

- ⇒ Our Lenten Project will be the Food Pantry of Kankakee. Items will be collected starting March 5.
- ⇒ All our invited to our Spring Forward Donut Breakfast on Sunday, March 9 following mass in the hall. Enjoy donuts, breakfast pastries and fellowship with the St. James community!

Sacred Heart—

- ⇒ The week of March 9th, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in thanksgiving for answered prayers
- ⇒ Our next CCW meeting is Thursday, March 11 at 6:30 pm. Hostesses are Shirley St. Germaine and Denise Wenzelman.
- ⇒ Save the date—Sacred Heart CCW Spring Luncheon will be Thursday, April 24 at **St. James Parish Hall.**

All Parishes

- ⇒ **Tri-Parish Office Hours**— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.
- ⇒ Call the parish office to request your statement of donations to the parish for 2024.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Bruno of Querfort (March 9) was the great-uncle of Saint Bruno of Wurzburg. In 996 he accompanied Emperor Otto III to Rome, where he met Saint Adalbert of Prague. He was the spiritual student of Saint Romuald and Saint Adalbert of Magdeburg. Bruno wrote a biography of Saint Adalbert, and of the martyred monks known as *The Five Polish Brothers*. He was the head of the School of Magdeburg and chaplain of Emperor Otto III. Bruno was a Benedictine Camaldolese monk, taking the name *Boniface* in 997. Later he became the archbishop to the Slavs in Merseburg (in modern Germany) in 1004. He evangelized Hungarians, Petsbenges, Prussians and Russians. Boniface was later martyred. He is listed with two feast days because he was known in some areas by his given name, Bruno, and in some by his cloistered name, (Boniface).

Other obscure saint of the week: St. Catherine of Bologna (March 9) was born to the nobility of Bologna, Italy. She was the daughter of a diplomat. Tradition says her father received a vision telling him of her birth. Catherine was the maid of honor to the daughter of a marquis, receiving the same training and education as her mistress. She became a Franciscan tertiary at age 14 and later a Poor Clare nun. Catherine served the order as the novice mistress. She established a Poor Clare convent at Bologna, Italy in 1456, and served as its abbess. Catherine was known as a miracle worker, prophetess, and a mystic. In addition, she was a visionary, painter and manuscript illuminator. She received a Christmas Day vision of Jesus cradled in Mary's arms.



The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

Now Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wild. For 40 wilderness days and nights he was tested by the Devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when the time was up he was hungry.

The Devil, playing on his hunger, gave the first test: "Since you're God's Son, command this stone to turn into a loaf of bread."

Jesus answered by quoting Deuteronomy: "It takes more than bread to really live."

For the second test he led him up and spread out all the kingdoms of the earth on display at once. Then the Devil said, "They're yours in all their splendor to serve your pleasure. I'm in charge of them all and can turn them over to whomever I wish. Worship me and they're yours, the whole works."

Jesus refused, again backing his refusal with Deuteronomy: "Worship the Lord your God and only the Lord your God. Serve him with absolute single-heartedness."

For the third test the Devil took him to Jerusalem and put him on top of the Temple. He said, "If you are God's Son, jump. It's written, isn't it, that 'he has placed you in the care of angels to protect you; they will catch you; you won't so much as stub your toe on a stone?'"

"Yes," said Jesus, "and it's also written, 'Don't you dare tempt the Lord your God.'"

That completed the testing. The Devil retreated temporarily, lying in wait for another opportunity (*from Luke 4*).

**WE HAVE BEEN
MARKED WITH THE
SIGN OF
REPENTANCE**



Gospel Shorts

To Whom Shall We Listen?

In his desert experience, we find Jesus being tempted to destruction in much the same way that empty promises present themselves to us. Despite the futility of it all, we often attempt to turn stones into bread, as it were — we reach for our nourishment in places that can never really produce it. We reach for power in ways that are destructive to us and to others. We play foolishly with the gifts we have been given, expecting God to save us from our own foolishness.

Jesus could say, "No!" to the empty promises because he was attuned to the Spirit within him. That same Spirit has been given to us. How well do we listen?

Questions Catholics Ask

What are we to believe about "the Fall" in Genesis?

First, the term never appears in the Bible. The theology of the Fall evolves over time and reflection by church fathers, especially Augustine who popularized the term "original sin" to define humanity's "fall from grace." (See Questions Catholics Ask: ["What is 'original sin' "?](#))

Which is not to say biblical texts concerning the first sin don't provide ample material to support the doctrine that followed. The story is dramatically simple: God makes a man and woman in the divine image and instructs them not to eat from a single tree in the garden. Eating its fruit would be fatal. Yet the couple prefers to take advice from a fellow creature in the Garden. This serpent claims the fruit doesn't cause death, but actually delivers fullness of life as God enjoys. This turns out to be the worst fake news in history.

This ancient myth is etiological, in the manner of Rudyard Kipling's stories of how the leopard gets its spots and the rhino its wrinkles. Why is life so hard? people wonder. Is God doing this to us? Do we deserve to suffer? The story of the Garden assures us that God doesn't cause harm. People do this; and we do it with every choice we make against God's benevolent guidance.

Saint Paul later hooks this story about the origins of suffering to the gospel accounts of the passion of Jesus. Paul simplifies the math by condensing the story to two crucial actors. One chooses the way of disobedience (not listening to God), launching the story of sin and suffering. Another chooses perfect obedience and, by means of his voluntary suffering, reverses the consequences of sin and death. One man falls, and another is lifted into the heavens. The point is clear: the self-willed path leads to ruin. Pursuing the will of God leads to salvation. Choose wisely.

The theology of the Fall becomes problematic when it narrows its focus on two "original" persons; one historical choice; and the dreadful consequences for the rest of us. Because of a single defining moment most of us didn't participate in, men and women are perpetually alienated from each other and the earth, between generations, and from God. Most parochial school kids figure out early on this is a pretty raw deal for a piece of fruit. To transfer our gaze to the significance of every human decision—toward self-will, or for the holy will—is to recognize that we each choose to fall, or to rise.



Saint Paul later hooks this story about the origins of suffering to the gospel accounts of the passion of Jesus.

Reflection

The Right Side

Every Sunday morning an old man walked several blocks to the church in his neighborhood. He was deaf, so he couldn't hear the sermon, the music of the choir, or the congregational singing.

"Why do you spend your Sundays in that church when you can't hear a word?" a neighbor asked.

"I want the people around here to know which side I'm on," he replied.

How about you? Do your neighbors know which side you're on, on Sunday morning?

SAVE THE DATE:

**MONDAY, MARCH 31 THRU
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2ND SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH BRADLEY, IL.**

Our mission at our Parish Church (designated as a Pilgrimage Church for the Diocese by Bishop Hicks) is available to anyone interested with an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation available each evening (of the Mission) beginning at 6pm until just prior to our 7pm mission presentation which is being given by Father Adrian Burke OSB. His parish mission topic will be **We (the church) as: "Pilgrims of Hope"**.



Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

Why are chalices made of gold?

These vessels are noble in more ways than one.



Gold chalices have been used in the Catholic liturgy for centuries and the reasons go beyond simple aesthetics.

Let's take a closer look at some of the factors that helped shape this tradition...

In the early Church, chalices were sometimes made from wood, glass, or even clay. However, these materials had drawbacks—wood absorbed wine, glass was fragile, and clay could crack.

St. Jerome (c. 347–420 AD) once wrote about a priest using a glass chalice that broke mid-Mass, spilling the Precious

lood. By contrast, gold does not corrode, does not interact with wine, and is easy to clean, making it a reliable material for holding the Blood of Our Lord.

One of the earliest recorded gold chalices belonged to Pope Sylvester I, who lived during the early 4th century. According to tradition, Emperor Constantine, after legalizing Christianity, gifted the Church several golden vessels for use in worship. This set a precedent: if the Church could use the best materials for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, why settle for less?

Around that exact same time, St. John Chrysostom emphasized that if kings on earth drank from gold cups, how much more fitting was it to use gold for the chalice that held Christ's Blood?

Today, Church law still requires that chalices be made of noble materials that do not absorb liquids, with gold or gold-plated interiors preferred (Canon 930). The gold chalice should be a beautiful reminder to us: if we are to receive the Real Presence in the Eucharist, shouldn't we also make ourselves noble vessels for Our Lord?

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Bishop McNamara Assembly 202-Vocational Dinner and Auction

Saturday, March 29, 2025 at Knights of Columbus Hall

Cocktails—6:00 pm / Dinner—7:00 pm

Please plan on attending this event that supports our future priests—this event is open to all.

Please complete the Dinner Reservation form found in the entrance to the church and return it to Deacon Pat Skelly prior to March 21, 2025.

Please see Deacon Ron for additional reservation forms.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A
90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION HONORING

Jackie Cross

SUNDAY, MARCH 30th
OPEN HOUSE . 2 - 4 PM . CAKE RECEPTION
Sacred Heart Church, Goodrich
588 S 10000W RD, BONFIELD, IL
RSVP TO GLORIA - CALL OR TEXT 779.435.3085

GIFTS ARE NOT NECESSARY. YOUR PRESENCE IS THE BEST GIFT OF ALL

Note: change of location to St. James Parish Hall.

Lenten Fish Frys in Dwight

St. Patrick's and the Knights of Columbus will again be having their Annual Lenten Fish Frys at St. Patrick's Hall in Dwight.

March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28,
April 4, and April 11 5pm-7pm

The price includes your choice of baked cod, fried pollock and breaded shrimp. Also available—grilled cheese sandwich and mac & cheese (new). Your choice of sides is baked potato, French fries, Cole slaw, apple sauce and rolls, beverage and a dessert, while they last.

Take out orders are available for the same price. You can call ahead at 815-584-3110

No price increase from last year!
Adults / High School - \$13.00
Grade School - \$6.00
Pre-School Free



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.

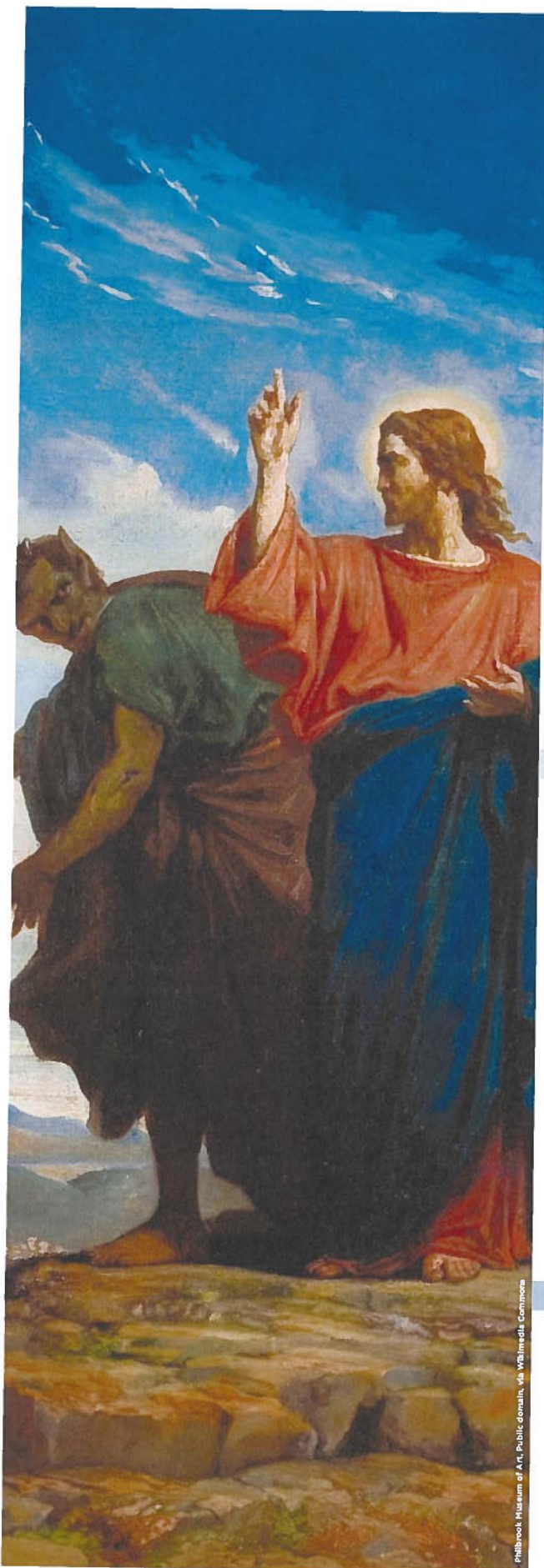
GO EVANGELIZE

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.



Phillip Brook Museum of Art, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 4:4b

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

Gospel Luke 4:1-13; L24C

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus re-
turned from the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit into the des-
ert for forty days,
to be tempted by the devil.

He ate nothing during those days,
and when they were over he was
hungry.

The devil said to him,
"If you are the Son of God,
command this stone to become bread."

Jesus answered him,
"It is written, *One does not live on
bread alone.*"

Then he took him up and showed him
all the kingdoms of the world in a
single instant.

The devil said to him,
"I shall give to you all this power and glory;
for it has been handed over to me,
and I may give it to whomever I wish.

All this will be yours, if you worship me."
Jesus said to him in reply,

"It is written:
*You shall worship the Lord, your God,
and him alone shall you serve.*"

Then he led him to Jerusalem,
made him stand on the parapet of the
temple, and said to him,
"If you are the Son of God,
throw yourself down from here, for it is
written:

*He will command his angels concern-
ing you, to guard you,*

and:
*With their hands they will support you,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.*"

Jesus said to him in reply,

"It also says,
*You shall not put the Lord, your God, to
the test.*"

When the devil had finished every
temptation,
he departed from him for a time.

Reflecting on the Gospel

"Where is God?" was the refrain posed by a sister who ministers in Port-au-Prince as she recounted to a group of religious leaders stories of immense suffering and death following the earthquake in Haiti. Was God in the earthquake? Did God send it to test our faith? How can we recognize the voice of a loving God in such times of desolation?



Today's gospel shows Jesus in a similar time of struggle. He is returning from the Jordan, where he has just been baptized by John, a powerful experience of knowing the certainty of God's delight in him as beloved Son. He has also sensed the Spirit making a home in him. The contrast between this idyllic scene at the river and his bleak struggle in the desert is stark. At stake in this struggle is the question of both who is God and who is Jesus as beloved Son of God. "If you are the Son of God . . ." taunts the tempter. And so it is with us, too, when great trials shake our self-understanding and cause us to question our reliance on God.

The readings today don't provide reasoned arguments in answer to these deep questions, but they do show us a way to engage the struggles as we are invited more deeply into the mystery of suffering, dying, and rising as God's cherished ones. The reading from Deuteronomy reminds us of the long history of God's saving deeds and asks us to declare these, to remind us that our faith in times of trouble is not baseless.

In the gospel, we see Jesus relying on the word of God to guide and strengthen him. He engages in a kind of Bible battle with the devil, a sobering reminder that anyone can quote Scripture to their own purposes. Jesus shows that daily immersion of ourselves in Scripture enables us to recognize the authentic voice of God and reject the traitorous lead of the tempter. Jesus unmasks the false allure of believing in a God who would prove divine love by acting like an indulgent parent, giving in to our every desire. He exposes the untruth of believing in a God whose power is displayed in ostentatious empires or in manipulating the laws of nature. His replies to the devil reveal that God does not send misfortune to test us, nor does God respond to "tests" that we construct in order to prove God's loving nature. God is not a sadistic puppeteer, who dallies with us to see whether we will keep steady in our faith. God is continually drawing us ever more deeply into the mystery of the divine love, most especially in times of greatest adversity.

Lent provides us an opportunity to embrace anew such struggles as Jesus faced. Like him, we claim the power of the Spirit that has been given to us in baptism and daily immerse ourselves in the word. Clarity in hearing that word comes when we go apart to deserted spaces and when we fast so as to sharpen our hunger for God and for acting in solidarity with God's starving people.