



1st Sunday of Lent (Year B)



Mark 1: 12 – 15

After Jesus was baptized, the Spirit drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the Angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

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Reflection:

Much like his ancestors, who were saved from Egypt’s army by their passage through the waters of the red sea only to find themselves in a desert wilderness, so Jesus is led into the wilderness to undergo a similar period of testing. This same truth applies continues to apply today. Far from landing us directly into “the promised land”, baptism is often followed by an extended time in which we are tested in the wilderness of everyday life, so that we may learn to trust in God.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

“Tell of a time when your faith, hope or love was tested. What happened?”



Snakes Can't Talk: (a bedtime story)

"Snakes can't talk," Toby said after Mom had finished reading the story.

"And they can't listen either," Sally added.

"Very well children", Mom responded. "But, remember, there is more to the story than that."

The next day, Toby and Sally were stuck inside with nothing to do.

"It's raining again," Toby complained.

"Why does it always rain on weekends?" Sally added.

"I've got an idea," Toby said. "Let's play soccer."

"We are not allowed to play soccer inside," Sally answered. "Mom said so."

"Don't be afraid," Toby said. "Mom will never know. After all, we'll use a foam ball."

Okay then," Sally agreed. "You take a shot and I'll be the goalie."

"First to five is the winner."

"Oh no, look what happened," Toby cried out. "Sally, are you okay?"

"I'm okay, but Mom's not going to be happy."

"You couldn't help it, Sally. It was an accident."

"Not when Mom finds out I broke the vase while playing soccer."

"Quick, Mom is coming, let's hide."

Toby and Sally disappeared upstairs into their separate rooms.

"Sally... Toby... I'm home," Mom called out.

But there was no response.

"Oh there you are," Mom said, as first Toby, then Sally, came out of their rooms. "But why were you hiding?"

Toby looked at Sally. Sally looked at Toby. It didn't take long for Mom to figure it out.

"You didn't play soccer in the house, did you?" Mom asked.

Sally and Toby looked surprise. How did she know?

"Toby made me do it," Sally said.

Toby looked down at the ground.

"Toby," Mom said. "What do you have to say for yourself?"

"You wouldn't believe a snake made me do it?" Toby asked tentatively.

"Snakes can't talk," Mom replied. "Don't you remember?" and, with the beginning of a smile on her face, she added, "but, unlike snakes, you have ears to listen."

"Now, come downstairs and help me put away the groceries, then you can help me clean up the mess you made in the living room."

The Story of the Snake: (a bedtime story adapted from Genesis 3: 1-14)

"Do my ears deceive me?" The snake asked the woman. "Did I hear it right? Did God tell you that you could not eat any of the fruit in the garden?"

"No, silly," the woman replied. "We are allowed to eat from all of the trees in the garden, except from one tree. If we eat from the tree in the middle of the garden, we shall die."

"Really?" The snake sounded quite intrigued. "I find that most interesting. I once ate from that tree and, as you can see for yourself, I am still very much alive."

"You've eaten from that tree?" The woman asked with great surprise.

"Oh yeah," the snake confirmed. "The best fruit I ever had."

"Really?" The woman asked.

"Really," the snake confirmed. "Besides," the snake continued, "I know why God does not want you to eat of the tree."

"And why is that?", the woman asked, drawn in by what the snake was saying.

"God knows that once you eat of that tree, you will be as wise as God himself; you will know the difference between good and evil."

The woman drew closer to the tree and examined the fruit. It looked so good, so delicious.

"Go ahead," the snake whispered. "Try some. God will never know."

And the woman ate.

Later, she gave some to the man, and he ate.

Only then were their eyes opened and they realized they were naked.

"Quick, hide," the man told his wife. "God is coming."

And they both hid behind some bushes.

Meanwhile, God was drawing closer.

"Adam... Eve... Where are you?" He called out.

But there was no response.

Unable to hide any longer, the man spoke up.

"Here I am," he said, and bent his head in shame.

"Why were you hiding?" God asked. "Have you done something wrong?"

"The woman that you gave me as a friend made me do it," the man answered.

"No, not me," the woman insisted. "It's the snake that made me do it. It was the snake that told me to eat."

"Very well," God said, as sadness filled his heart. "Very well," he said again, as he looked first at the man, then the woman, and finally on the snake.

After a long pause, God spoke.

"From the garden I will send you; into the wilderness you must go."

And to the snake, "On your belly you will slither, on your belly you must go."

Then God placed an angel at the entrance of the garden, so that no one could come back in.

Then he made this promise, "A child will come one day, a child born of a woman, a child that will crush the snake forever, and, through him, all people will be made one with God."

Would you like to watch a [video](#) of Adam and Eve?



Development and Peace Jar:

Development and Peace has a wonderful way of including families in their International Projects. Each year they offer a Lenten calendar that both educates and encourages daily giving of some form. Please check at your local parish or on [Development and Peace's website](#) for a Lenten Calendar. If not,

- you may want to decorate a glass jar with a desert-scape (Palm trees can be made from two popsicle sticks glued together with two green palms (cut from solid construction paper) attached between the sticks). Sand dunes and blue sky, cut from construction paper, can enhance the overall look of the jar.
- You may even want to suggest activities they can do around the house to earn spare change for their jars.
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More Daily Suggestions for Lent:

Here are some more daily suggestions for those who are working on the Lenten Garland project started last week, wherein children pick a daily Lenten activity out of a jar and add a coloured loop to a paper garland they are making, that extends across the ceiling of their bedroom in preparation for Easter.

- Remember someone who is struggling in your prayers.
- Make a "thank you" card or a "thinking of you" for someone.
- Offer to do someone else's chores.
- Apologize to someone you have hurt.
- Read the Story of Samuel (1 Samuel 3: 1-10), then spend a minute listening to God.
- Think of three ways you saw God at work... Spend a moment to thank him.
- Say a prayer each time you eat something.
- Pray for someone who may have hurt you
- Phone a family member that lives elsewhere.
- Do something good for the environment.
- No T.V. watching today.
- Draw a picture of the things you see inside your church.
- Say a prayer before you go to bed.
- Read the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37).
- Go for a walk and thank God for all you see.
- Ask God to help you forgive someone that has hurt you.
- Read the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32).
- Ask God to help you live this day for him when you get up.
- Write a short thank you letter to God for the day (or draw a picture).
- Make a card for someone you love.