



CAUGHT!

It is like a scene from a nightmare. Yet it turns out well.

Suppose you are the woman in Sunday's [Gospel](#). You have been "caught in adultery" (or some other sin) by the scribes and Pharisees. They shove you into the middle of a circle of people. They reveal your embarrassing sin to everyone.

Shamed, stressed, perspiring, you hear them judge you according to the law of Moses. "The law is sacred," they declare. "It says you must be stoned to death for your crime."

You are vaguely aware that someone called the "Teacher" is there too. He had been instructing the crowd, it seems, just before you were dragged in. Now the attention is all on you. The nightmare is here.

These accusers have a reason for doing all this to you. They want to trap the Teacher and disgrace him. So they ask him if they aren't correct in stoning you to death. He always preaches about forgiveness and love, but now what will he say? If he defends you for the sake of love, he will break the law of Moses. If he does not, he must pick up a stone and throw it.

The Teacher does not answer the loaded question, but begins to scratch lines in the dirt, absent-mindedly. People hold their breath, and the accusers begin to gloat. His silence is answer enough.

Actually the Teacher is just lost in thought.

My Abba has loved each of them through all ages, no matter whether they are sinners or not. "Come together and be my people," he has told them. "Love one another in the way I love you, forgiving your sins." This my Abba wants more than anything else.

Look at them. Hatred drives this crowd together, not love. They want killing, not forgiveness.

The accusers interrupt with their question again. "What is your answer? The law of Moses says to stone this person."

You, the accused woman, stand in the midst of all this, humiliated. Your cheeks turn hot and your tears pool on the ground. You bend your head in shame. The crowd has it right, you think.

All at once the teacher snaps the mood. He utters a sentence that sums up all Lent and the Gospel.

"Let the one among you who is without sin throw the first stone."

This response could refashion the whole earth, if we would just allow it. If we would accept our own sins we could have peace. We would not blame others. We could have the forgiveness God has held out to us all along. If we deny it, we will be living an untruth. We will be saying that God cannot love us as we are. Nor can other people love or be loved as they are.

This is a lie.

All of a sudden you notice that the whole crowd has crept away in shame. You stand alone before the quiet Teacher, as the woman in the Gospel did. He asks you, "Well, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" You reply, "No one, sir." And he says, "Do you condemn yourself?" You spend a long time on this answer, because love is so very hard to accept.

"I believe, Lord, help my unbelief," you stammer at last.

"Neither do I condemn you," says Jesus. "Go and sin no more."

Fr. John Foley, S. J. of the Center for Liturgy

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PRAYER

Without the sense of God's will, we narrow down our lives to the material world. We are like misers crouching over their hoards and never seeing the skies; indeed, we may narrow our prison still further, seeing in everything only the image of ourselves.

But once we are made aware of the greatness of events as expressions of God's love, once we see and live their sacramental value, then we are liberated into a greater life; the winds of eternity blow about us, and the infinite skies are our home, and we too walk the eternal hills.

Gerald Vann

There are often sincere, high minded Christians, whose sound and otherwise pure faith—fir it is unshaken in trials— is lacking in just this matter: they believe in the light, but as they would believe in the existence of a world never to be seen by them, or which they expect to visit at some date so distant that it seems unreal. They have a deep-seated faith, but hardly it has grown beyond the roots, since it is divorced from hope.

By his words "I am the Resurrection and the Life", Jesus condemns the mistake of faith without hope. He himself is its living refutation, because, in this Divine Incarnate Person, he is the incursion of the invisible world. He IS the Resurrection and the Life. Faith is directed to him, to that penetration of the unseen into the visible, perpetuated in his existence, and not at an invisible world forever separated from the visible. In this way, the believer is placed by faith in possession of a hope to share in the resurrection and the life, believing them not as unattainable realities, but put within reach.

Louis Bouyer

The branches that are blessed and brought home on Passion Sunday are placed near the cross and the Scriptures. They remind us that Lent is the slow coming of spring to the earth, the renewal of life.

Household Prayers and Blessings.



FASTING

Atonement means, quite literally, "to make one", but this reconciliation is costly because its path is through the suffering of the cross.

There is dying that goes with unity. There is pain that goes with giving up swords and spears, and living with pruning hooks and plows. There is pain and death and vulnerability that come with living in the world defenseless, but in that way comes unity.

The church has always been clear that as the Body of Christ its life must be cruciform. Thus, if we are to make shalom, following Christ, it cannot be at the level of lowest risk. It will require becoming vulnerable to the pain of the world. It will require a willingness to die.

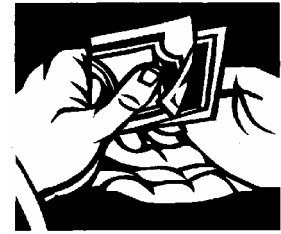
Bruce C. Birch and Larry Rasmussen

It is in this darkness, when there is nothing left in us that can please or comfort our own minds, when we seem to be useless and worthy of all contempt, when we seem to have failed, when we seem to be destroyed and devoured, it is then that the deep and secret selfishness that is too close for us to identify is stripped away from our souls. It is in this darkness that we find liberty. It is in this abandonment that we are made strong. This is the night which empties us and makes us pure.

Thomas Merton

When the Fast makes its appearance, like a kind of spiritual springtime, let us as soldiers burnish our weapons, and as harvesters sharpen our sickles, and as sailors order our thoughts against the waves of extravagant desires, and as travelers set out on the journey toward heaven, and as wrestlers strip for the contest. For the believer is at once a harvester, a sailor, a soldier, a wrestler and a traveler.

St. John Chrysostom



ALMSGIVING

Let the sinner be punished, yes—but not by sinners. Let the Law be carried out, but not by lawbreakers. This, unquestionably is the voice of Justice, Justice that pierced those men like a javelin. Looking into themselves, they realized their guilt, and one by one they all went out. Two remained behind: the miserable woman, and Mercy. The Lord raised his eyes, and with a gentle look he asked her: "Has no one condemned you?" She replied: "No one, sir." And he said "Then neither will I condemn you."

What is this, Lord? Are you giving approval to immorality? Not at all. Take note of what follows: "Go and sin no more." You see then that the Lord does indeed pass sentence, but it is sin he condemns, not people.

St. Augustine of Hippo

Love is not a cultural nicety; it does not ratify one's desire nor does it make one fit in or feel good. Love is God's self-communication through Jesus, the Word made Flesh; and in human affairs, love is the absolute will that calls forth each person to God. Love reveals the individual's duty that furthers the Divine Plan for all creation. This "winter will" plain and perennially out of season to tepid human expectation, cuts and burns to prepare for the glory to come.

Richard Giannone

I say that we should visit Christ while there is still opportunity, take care of him and feed him. We should clothe Christ and welcome him. We should honor him, not only at our table, like some; not only with ointments like Mary; not only with a sepulcher like Joseph of Arimathea; nor with thing which have to do with burial, like Nicodemus, who loved Christ only by half; nor finally with gold, frankincense and myrrh like the Magi, who came before all those whom we have mentioned. But as the Lord of All desires mercy and not sacrifice, and as compassion is better than tens of thousands of fat rams, let us offer him this mercy through the needy and those who are at present cast down to the ground.

St. Gregory Nazianzus

Current Events

The Season of Lent

All parishioners are reminded of the Penitential character of the Lenten Season. The church instructs us that our penance should be not only private, but also communal—that is, for the sake of the whole church. The three traditional means of penance embraced during this season are PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING.

Daily Mass during Lent will be offered at the usual time 9 a.m. in the Rectory Chapel. If there is a sufficient number of participants, the Mass will be moved into the Church. If not, it will remain in the Chapel.

Stations of the Cross are offered at 7 p.m. on Fridays during Lent in St. Martin's Church. All Parishioners are encouraged to participate in this venerable devotion. Young families are especially encouraged to attend.

Our parish will be participating in Operation Rice Bowl—the National Campaign to assist poverty stricken areas of our country. Weekly bulletin items will highlight this time of almsgiving.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered every Saturday afternoon at 3 p.m. in St. Martin's Church and on Sunday Mornings by request at St. Paul's.

Our Parish Lenten Reconciliation Service will take place THIS SUNDAY at 4 p.m. in St. Martin's Church. All Parishioners are encouraged to take this opportunity for Confession and reconciliation before Holy Week.



Lenten Adult Study

Father Ken will conclude the study of the Passion this Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Parish hall. Plan to attend.

Remember Your Loved Ones at Easter through remembrance in our Easter Masses.

An envelope for your intentions is included in this month's packet. Living and deceased members of your family can benefit from the Sacrifice of the Mass at Easter.

We ask that all envelopes be submitted by April 1st for Publication in the Easter Bulletin. Names submitted after April 1st will not be published in the Easter bulletin.

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. This is the most important week in our Church Year—it is even more important than Christmas—and all Catholics are reminded to give it the proper respect it deserves.

The Services of the Paschal Triduum, beginning with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper are meant to draw us into the mystery of the Passion and death of the Lord so that we may share in the glory of His Resurrection.

No Catholic should dismiss him/her self from the services of the Paschal Triduum, but, rather, should arrange all other functions so that participation in the sacred mysteries of these days is paramount (that is first and foremost!) Parents are reminded of their obligation to bring their children to venerate these sacred days. No one is exempt from participating in the mystery of our Lord's Dying and Rising. Rather, all should arrange their lives during these days so that there are no obstacles to the participation in the Paschal Mystery.

The Family of Joseph Monteforte wishes to extend its gratitude to our parish for the prayers and words of encouragement during Joe's recent accident and hospitalization. Anyone wishing to send Joe a card may direct it to:

Joseph Monteforte
c/o Jefferson Hospital
111 S. 11th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107

"This is the Day the Lord has made—let us rejoice and be glad in it!"

These great words of the Easter Season remind us that through the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord, God has done great things for us and we are glad indeed!

One of these "great deeds" God has given us is the gift of our Faith and the gift of our parish. May your Easter Offering reflect your gratitude to God for these wonderful things He has done for us.

Happenings

Monday
No Morning Mass
Parish Office Closed

Tuesday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Wednesday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Evening Adult Study—
The Passion of Jesus
7 p.m. SM Hall

Thursday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Study Group—10 a.m. Parish Hall

Friday
Day of ABSTINENCE

9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

7:00 p.m.
STATIONS OF THE CROSS
SM

Saturday
No Morning Mass

3 p.m. Confessions
Church of St. Martin
Jackson

4 p.m. Vigil Mass
Palm Sunday

Sunday
Palm Sunday

8 a.m. Confessions
Church of St. Paul
Starucca

8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass
Church of St. Paul
Starucca

Religious Education
9:00 a.m.—10:45 a.m.
Parish Hall

11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass
Church of St. Martin

Mass Schedule for the Week of March 19-25, 2007			
9:00 a.m. unless otherwise	Feast	Intention	Offered by
Monday	Annunciation of the Lord	No Mass Scheduled	
Tuesday	Lenten Weekday	Fred Oleson	Family
Wednesday	Lenten Weekday	Patricia Oleson	Family
Thursday	Lenten Weekday	William Nash	Fr. Ken
Friday	Lenten Weekday	Kathleen Burke	Road Runners
Saturday	Lenten Weekday	No Mass Scheduled	
Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion			
Vigil	4:00 p.m. SM	Parishioners	Pastor
Sunday	8:30 a.m. SP	Patricia Oleson	Family
Sunday	11:00 a.m. SM	Richard Gralewski	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Chianese

Scriptures for the Week	
Monday Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord	Isaiah 7: 10-14 Hebrews 10:4-10 Luke 1:26-38
Tuesday Lenten Weekday	Numbers 21:4-9 John 8:21-30
Wednesday Lenten Weekday	Daniel 3:14-95 John 8:31-42
Thursday Lenten Weekday	Genesis 17:3-9 John 8:51-59
Friday Lenten Weekday	Jeremiah 20:10-13 John 10:31-42
Saturday Lenten Weekday	Ezekiel 37:21-28 John 11:31-42
Sunday Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion	Luke 19:28-40 Isaiah 50:4-7 Philippians 2:6-11 Luke 22:14-23:56

Feast of the Week the Annunciation

Again Lent's austerity is interrupted as we solemnly keep a feast in honor of the Annunciation. The Annunciation is a mystery that belongs to the temporal rather than to the sanctoral cycle in the Church's calendar. For the feast commemorates the most sublime moment in the history of time, the moment when the Second Divine Person of the most Holy Trinity assumed human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Thus it is a feast of our Lord, even as it is of Mary, although the liturgy centers wholly around the Mother of God. — The Church's Year of Grace, Pius Parsch

The Annunciation has been beautifully written about, first in the Gospel of St. Luke (LK 1, 26) and then by holy mystics from their visions and by saints and poets throughout the ages. The Annunciation has been beautifully depicted by many talented artists over the years. I remember the beautiful and miraculous painting of the Annunciation I prayed before at the Annunciata Church in Florence.



Many Poets have written about the Annunciation including Fr. John Bannister Tabb, John Donne, the American Protestant Abby Maria Hemenway and Caryll Houselander. The English writer, Marigold Hunt, in a delightful child-like poem "The Hail Mary" states regarding St. Gabriel,

He began a prayer
for you and me
"Hail Mary, full of Grace

The Lord is with Thee."

One lesson we learn from Our Lady at the Annunciation is complete surrender. Our Lady completely surrendered to God. It was perfect trust and total dedication. We, too, should strive to surrender our entire selves to God in complete willingness to serve, to fulfill the mission God has given us in the way God wishes us to do it. Our response, too, should be "Behold I am your servant, yes I shall do your will." We should ask Our Lady for the grace to be docile to God's will for us and for the strength to do it.

Some people might not realize that God has given them a mission—a special one just for them to do. Each of us has one. Each of us is called by God to fulfill a very special plan. It may be to teach, to write, to start a new apostolate, to raise a child, to be a religious or to care for the elderly. It may be to be a carpenter, or to bring joy to those in the office at work, or to cook and clean and keep house. Whatever our mission is, it is special and important. It is God's will for us.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

In the Story of the woman caught in adultery, Jesus forgave the sin and blessed the sinner. By doing this, he challenges us to first remember our own sin before we seek to punish other people for their sins. In this Gospel, the woman is given the opportunity to make a new beginning.

People in countries such as Niger, who live on the edge of the desert, are working to steward their resources wisely so all members in their communities have access to basic necessities. Working with Catholic Relief Services to dig new wells and access new sources of clean water, people in Niger are given a new beginning—one that allows villages and communities to thrive. Fresh water can be used for cooking, drinking and farming, which are all necessary for healthy villages and livelihoods. Please support CRS' water management projects with your prayers, fasting, learning, and giving with Operation Rice Bowl this week.

THE COLLECTION for Operation Rice Bowl will be taken up at the MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER on Holy Thursday.

Visit CRS online at www.crs.org/orb to learn more.

Recipe

Tuwo da Mia Kubewa [okra with cornmeal porridge] (serves 6)

- 2 Tbsp oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 tsp pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 10 oz frozen okra
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 3 oz tomato paste
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 3 cups water

Mia Kubewa (okra) : Put onion, garlic, and oil in a pot and fry until soft. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, and spices and simmer for a few minutes. Put okra in blender and blend until it becomes a thick paste. Add okra to ingredients in pot and simmer for 10 minutes.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

FEATURED COUNTRY

NIGER

Pope John Paul II reminded all Catholics again and again of their responsibility to care for the earth, the gift of the Creator.

The truth and the reality of God's forgiveness comes through very clearly in the actions of Jesus toward the woman caught in adultery. The burden of sin has dropped away from her, and her life could begin anew, as it can for each of us who need God's mercy and receive it through His generous grace in our lives.

Life in Niger is often hard and unforgiving. Starvation is never far away, and it is difficult for people to look beyond what the next harvest will bring, if anything. Back-breaking labor can, and has, harvested nothing but dust in the fields as its reward.

Catholic Relief Services, through its support of projects that teach methods of sustainable agriculture, management of scarce natural resources, and improved access to life-giving water, is making possible a better life for the Nigerian people. Self-help, training and education, communications among farmers' groups and improvements to the local infrastructure all play their part and all are supported by the contributions made by you and received through Operation Rice Bowl.

In a very real sense, the people of Niger have responded to the presence of God in their world by caring for the earth they live in harmony with, and by valuing the gift of life God has given them. Now is your chance to participate with God in caring for Creation, not only by caring for your part of our world, but by supporting others in CRS' work throughout the world.

Tuwo (cornmeal porridge): Mix cornmeal into 1 cup of cold water. Boil 2 cups of water in a pot. Add cornmeal mixture to boiling water and cook over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring constantly, until mixture becomes a thick porridge. Place okra mixture over cornmeal porridge and serve hot.

Liturgical Ministers

March 31-April 1, 2007

Palm Sunday

of the Lord's Passion

Vigil 4 p.m.
St. Martin's

Servers RJ & Olivia Klein
Lectors Bob Klein
Martina Lingobardo
EMOC Matt Menapace

8:30 a.m. St. Paul's

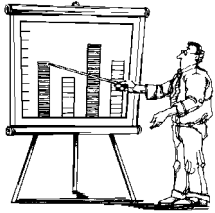
Servers
Lectors Rachael Gilleran
EMOC Marilyn Czachor

11:00 a.m. St. Martin's

Servers Tara & Kaitlyn Flor
Lectors Bonnie Klein
Barry Corrigan
EMOC Pat Stewart
Mary Lake
Andy Whitehead

Please Remember
in Prayer this Week

Travis Andrews
Helen Burdick
Eva Dew
Robert Gilleran
Dolores Goodger
Gertrude Leahy
Genevieve Leet
Marlene Mazzocchi
Joseph Monteforte
Julia Padaletti
Angelo and Joann Petriello
Sharon Walk



Financial Stewardship

“Each person should give what he in his heart has decided to give – not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Second Corinthians 9:7

Your Offering last Sunday

Your Offering last Sunday	
	March 18, 2007
Loose	109.75
Candles	6.25
Offertory SM	832.00
Offertory SP	144.00
Children's Offering	7.00
Dues	14.00
Fuel	55.00
Diocesan Assessment	73.00
Ash Wednesday	
Easter Flowers	25.00
Your offering to the Parish	1,266.00
National Collections	
Catholic Social Services	185.82
Total National Collections	185.82
Additional Account Deposits	
Easter Remembrance (STIPEND FUND)	
Debt Reduction	26.00
Total Additional Account Deposits	26.00
Total Deposits last Sunday	1,477.82

Christ has said: "Let the dead bury their dead." The Liturgical year is not a mere series of feasts intended to fix our minds on the dead past. It is, as Pope Pius XII told us, "Christ Himself, living on in his church, still pursuing that path of boundless mercy which, 'going about and doing good,' He began to tread during His Life here on earth. This he did in order that the souls of all might come in contact with his mysteries and, so to speak, live by them." God is still kneading the dough of human nature and making it rise today. It is by means of the liturgy that God unites the leavened mass with the Godhead. The is wy the church, at Matins on the Feast of the Epiphany sings "Today the church is united to her heavenly bridegroom." And at Easter she sings: "This is the day the Lord has made: a day of triumph and rejoicing."

A.G.Martimort

Parish Checkbook this Week

Balance Forward 03/01/07	1,547.85
Income	
Loose	109.75
Candles	6.25
Offertory SM	832.00
Offertory SP	144.00
Children's Offering	7.00
Dues	14.00
Utilities	55.00
Diocesan Assessment	73.00
EASTER Flowers	25.00
National Collection: Catholic Social Services	185.82
Transfer from Building Fund	
Transfer from Fundraising	
Total Income	1,451.82
Balance Forward	1,547.85
+ Income this week	1,451.82
Total Available Funds	2,999.67
Expenditures	
Administration	28.00
Rectory	448.33
Liturgy	-0-
Religious Education	-0-
Plant Operation and Maintenance	315.74
Insurance	-0-
Loan Repayment	500.00
Diocesan Collection Transmittal	
Total Expenditures	1,292.07
Funds Available	2,999.67
-Total Expenses	-1,292.07
Balance (03/08/07)	1,707.60

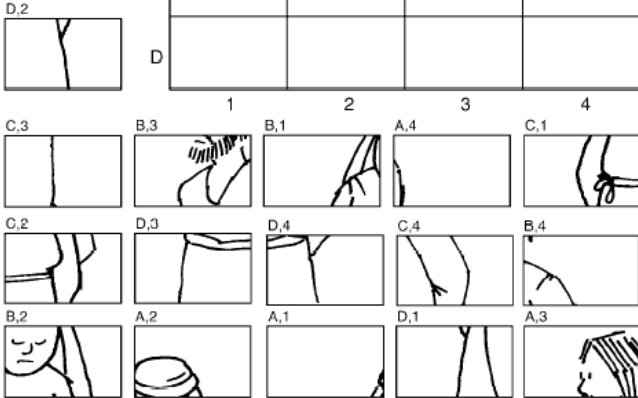
“How shall I make a return to the Lord for His goodness to me?”

Throwing Stones

The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who had been caught sinning. They said that in the law Moses commanded them to stone such women.

Copy the boxes below on the grid below.

A				
B				
C				
D				



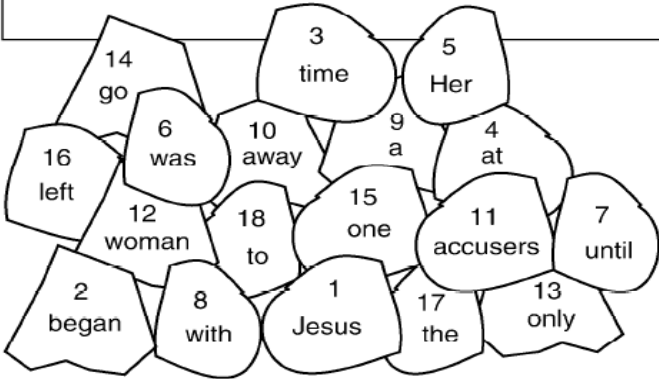
Jesus said, "If any of you is without sin, he should throw the first stone."

Circle 6 differences in the bottom picture.



At Jesus' words, something happened!

Write the words from the stones on the lines.



_____ 5 _____ 11 _____ 2 _____ 18

_____ 14 _____ 10 _____ 15 _____ 4 _____ 9 _____ 3

_____ 7 _____ 13 _____ 1 _____ 6 _____ 16

_____ 8 _____ 17 _____ 12



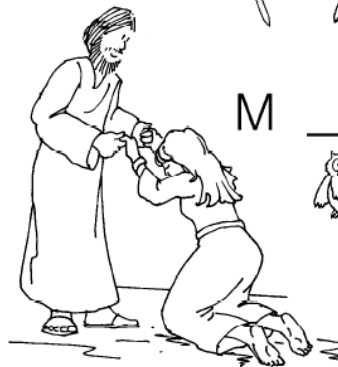
When they all had left, Jesus told the woman, "Sin no more."

Use the code to fill in the missing letters.

= E = I = N = O

S _____

M _____ R _____



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Parish
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of
St. Martin
of Tours
and
St. Paul
the
Apostle

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(570) 756-2105

E-Mail:
parish@martinoftours.com

Pastor
Rev. Kenneth M. Seegar

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Diane Frye
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Charlene Kempa
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Andrew Whitehead

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Michael Briechle, Chairperson
Richard Lake
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Matthew Menapace
Russ Pepe
Rita Reavey
Betsy Supancik,

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Chris Lake, DRE
Charlene Kempa
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Please
Patronize
Our
Sponsors

Quite naturally the First Sunday of Lent starts out with the temptations of Christ in the desert.

Why naturally? Because Lent is a time to take off the blinders of sin and prepare to listen truly during Holy Week. Jesus models this kind of listening in the Gospel.

He had been pulled into the desert by the voice that said "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." ([Lk 3:21-22](#)). Jesus already knew he was close to God, but even so, this voice echoed words of scripture that might have shocked him:

In the book of Isaiah hundreds of years before, it was the Messiah to whom God referred, saying, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights, upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations" ([Isaiah 42: 1-4](#))

Jesus needed time to digest this terribly wonderful message, especially as applied to himself. He had to become empty in order to receive it.

The devil knew about Jesus already, with a dumb and greedy knowledge.

If Jesus was this great servant of God, his strengths could be used. Maybe he also had a need to receive glory, to be someone who could tell God and others what to do.

Full and at the same time rapacious, the devil comes to Jesus, who is hungry. "Use your power," the devil says slyly to him. "No point in being empty. Just give a Godly command and this stone will turn into bread."

"One does not live by bread alone," Jesus answered from the scriptures.

Jesus' quotation comes from Moses' great second speech to the people of Israel, as do all his responses today.

[God had] let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your fathers, in order to show you that not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord" ([Deuteronomy 8:3](#)).

Note to reader: How do you assuage your hunger?

The devil moves on to a glory temptation. Join me, worship me, he says. All the kingdoms in the world will be yours. (Translation: you can be bigger than this heavenly father of yours is.) Jesus answers, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him alone shall you serve" ([Deuteronomy 6:13](#)).

Note to the reader: what do you and I worship and serve—instead of God?

Two temptations have failed. But even the devil can quote scripture. He uses Psalm 91, the part about God commanding the angels to guard the beloved one ([verses 11 and 12](#)). Just throw yourself off these heights, the devil suggests smoothly. God's angels will have no choice, they will have to come save you. Take advantage of who you are.

The Devil is inviting Jesus to step out of the intimate loving relation he already has with the Father and instead to make himself isolated, proud, alone and without love, but with power.

Note to the reader: Isn't this what power does?

Jesus says ([Deuteronomy 6:16](#)), "You shall not tempt the Lord your God." You shall not tell God and the angels what to do. You are only as big as you are.

Listen, listen. This is what Lent is about.

