

March 9, 2003
First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 9:8-15
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15



Focus Repent and believe the Good News.

Opening Prayer To each line, all respond, "Blessed be God."

Leader Your Spirit moved over the waters at the dawn of creation.

Leader You form us in the waters of the womb and give us new birth in the waters of baptism.

Leader You began creation anew in the waters of the flood.

Leader Your Son Jesus was baptized by John as a sign of his faithfulness.

Scripture Sharing What thought, line or image from the Scripture readings caught your attention?

Reflection The first Sunday of Lent sets believers on the path to an inward journey. In both the first and second readings, the waters wash away the sinfulness of humanity. The flood waters and the promise of God are remembered in baptism. Through baptism we begin a covenant relationship with God our Creator.

The Gospel depicts Jesus tested and tempted in the desert for 40 days. Mark is not descriptive of the temptations, but angels tent to Jesus and he passes the tests. As Jesus' begins his public ministry, he challenges the people to repent, turn from sin and believe the Good News!

Lent begins then with the reader embarking on a journey from the ravaging flood waters where God made a covenant to baptismal promise that Christians are marked by water into their faith and community. Faith and community are centered on salvation offered through God's son, Jesus.

One challenge during the Lenten season is to deepen one's faith. This inward journey asked much of us.

Faith Sharing

1. What in your heart keeps you from embracing the Good News?
2. What do you need to "turn from" this Lent so as to know your Creator more intimately?
3. What emotions and thoughts run through your mind at the celebration of a baptism? For the child? The parents? The sponsors? The community?
4. What does it mean to you to live like you believe you are loved unconditionally by God?

Action Response: *How do you live stewardship as your way of life?*

1. Write out how you will challenge yourself this Lent: personally, in relation to your family/friends, in relation to your faith community, and in relation to the larger community and the world.
2. How can you be part of conversion in the world of violence, war and grave human injustices.? Are there actions you can take? Can you include prayer for specific intentions each day?

Closing Prayer

Individuals offer their intentions to bring to prayer.

God, our loving creator, be with us during these solemn days of Lent. Draw us closer to Jesus who has saved us and leads us on our inward journey of repentance and living the Good News. We ask this in his name. Amen.