

Sunday Message

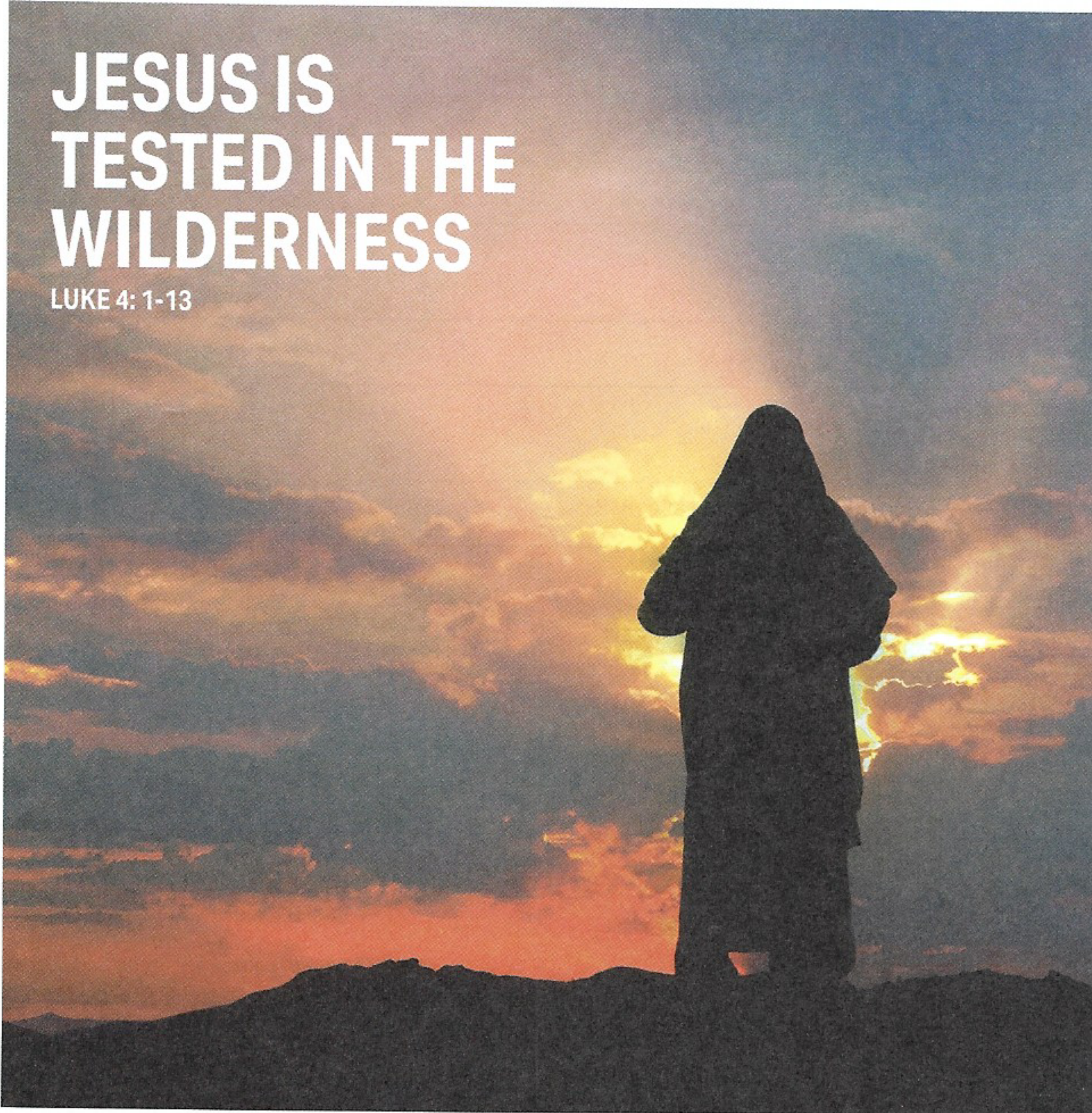
1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year C • 9th March 2025 • Psalter Week 1

JESUS IS TESTED IN THE WILDERNESS

LUKE 4: 1-13



This famous Gospel signifies the start of lent, and our own 40 days of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Jesus goes through his own torment in the desert and is tested to the limit to see if he is totally committed or not. His temptations are somewhat consoling for us, because we're reminded that he was fully human as well as divine.

We can identify somewhat with some of the struggles he must have endured as the heat and the dryness of the desert experience brought a weight of challenge and misery into his life. Despite the struggle and pain he is to endure, Jesus' determination is steadfast and the Gospel tells us that he stays loyal to his Father's plan. Some might suggest that these 40 days are a precursor for the challenges that will come later, as he descends into the city of Jerusalem. If this is a test, he passes with flying colours. Jesus will go on to say that we must not set our hearts on things to eat and things to drink. We set our hearts on God's kingdom, and these other things will be given to us as well. ■

SAY

Help me to use your love as a way
to persevere in my Lenten intentions.
I am weak, but I know with your help,
I can use these small sacrifices in my life to draw closer to you.

REFLECT

As someone with a sweet tooth, the Lenten journey has always been an uphill task for me, with many a documented failure over the years. Then of course there are the 'days off', which seem to be obligatory in one's 40 days of fasting. Do I count Sundays? St Patrick's Day is surely not part of Lent? And the list goes on and on. We trick the mind into thinking that the 40 days will be a breeze and the sacrifice being made won't be too painful or arduous! Think again!

But for most of us, we know that lent is not meant to be a time of misery and pain. But it is a time to nourish some critical elements of our faith. Some would say that we need 40 days to reflect on the times in our lives when we feel hungry and alone. Do we still trust God? When our lives become a struggle to connect with people and what we're left with is a vacancy. Do we still believe God loves us? Or when tragedy enters our life and God seems nowhere to be found. Do we believe in God's presence?

I often describe Lent as an opportunity to reflect on the importance faith plays in our lives. As people of faith, it helps us greatly to reflect on God's love and compassion for his people. This is what roots our prayer lives. ■

LEARN

Guide me as I humbly seek to repent and return to your love.

DO

Choose one thing that you would like to work on for the 40 days of Lent. When you fail, don't be hard on yourself. Just try again.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*When he calls on me, I will answer him;
I will deliver him and give him glory,
I will grant him length of days.*

COLLECT

Grant, almighty God,
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,
that we may grow in understanding
of the riches hidden in Christ
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Deuteronomy 26:4-10

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy.

Moses spoke to the people: 'The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. And you shall make response before the LORD your God, "A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labour. Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O LORD, have given me." And you shall set it down before the LORD your God and worship before the LORD your God.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 91(90):1-2. 10-11. 12-13. 14-15
R. cf. 15b**R: Be with me, O Lord, in my distress.**

1. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,
and abides in the shade of the Almighty,
says to the LORD, 'My refuge,
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!' **R.**
2. Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach your tent.
For you has he commanded his angels
to keep you in all your ways. **R.**
3. They shall bear you upon their hands,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
On the lion and the viper you will tread,
and trample the young lion and the serpent. **R.**
4. Since he clings to me in love, I will free him,
protect him, for he knows my name.
When he calls on me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in distress;
I will deliver him, and give him glory. **R.**

SECOND READING Romans 10:8-13

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: What does Scripture say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put

to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For, 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Matthew 4:4b

R: Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

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

R: Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL Luke 4:1-13

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And 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.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone."'

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, 'To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."'

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle 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 concerning you, to guard you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' And Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."'

And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Give us the right dispositions, O Lord, we pray,
to make these offerings,
for with them we celebrate the beginning
of this venerable and sacred time.
Through Christ our Lord

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

Or

*The Lord will conceal you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will trust.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed now with heavenly bread,
by which faith is nourished, hope increased,
and charity strengthened,
we pray, O Lord,
that we may learn to hunger for Christ,
the true and living Bread,
and strive to live by every word
which proceeds from your mouth.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.