

FIRST READING

The confession of faith of the chosen people.

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

26:4-10

Moses said to the people:

“The priest will take the baskets of grain from your hands
and put them in front of the altar of the Lord your God.
And there, in the presence of the Lord your God, you must say,

‘My ancestor was merely a homeless Aramean,
who went to live in Egypt.
Although his family was small,
they became great and powerful,
a nation of many people.

‘The Egyptians showed no pity!
They oppressed our people and were very cruel to us.
Then we called out for help to you,
the Lord God of our ancestors.
You heard our cries and knew that we were in trouble,
distressed and oppressed.

‘You reached out your mighty arm and rescued us from Egypt.
You did fearsome things,
and you worked miracles and all kinds of wonders.

‘You brought us here
and gave us this land rich in milk and honey.
Now, Lord, I bring to you the best part of the crops
that you have given to me.’

“Leave your baskets there in the presence of the Lord your God
and bow down to worship him.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

91:1-2, 10-11

R. (see 15b) Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

Live under the protection
of God Most High
and stay in the shadow
of God All-Powerful.
Then you will say to the Lord,
“You are my fortress,
my place of safety;
you are my God, and I trust you.”

R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

No terrible disasters
will strike you or your home.
God will command his angels
to protect you wherever you go.

R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Matthew 4:4b

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

No one lives on bread alone,
But on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus was led by the Spirit
through the wilderness where he was tempted.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke

4:1-13

When Jesus returned from the Jordan River,
the power of the Holy Spirit was with him,
and the Spirit led him into the desert.
For forty days Jesus was tested by the devil,
and during that time he went without eating.
When it was all over, he was hungry.

The devil said to Jesus,
“If you are God’s Son, tell this stone to turn into bread.”

Jesus answered, “The Scriptures say,
‘No one can live only on food.’”

Then the devil led Jesus up to a high place
and quickly showed him all the nations on earth.
The devil said, “I will give all this power and glory to you.
It has been given to me,
and I can give it to anyone I want to.
Just worship me, and you can have it all.”

Jesus answered, “The Scriptures say:
‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!’”

Finally, the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem
and had him stand on top of the temple.
The devil said, “If you are God’s Son, jump off.
The Scriptures say: ‘God will tell his angels to take care of you.
They will catch you in their arms,
and you will not hurt your feet on the stones.’”

Jesus answered, “The Scriptures also say,
‘Don’t try to test the Lord your God!’”

After the devil had finished testing Jesus in every way possible,
he left him for a while.

The gospel of the Lord.



First Sunday of Lent Cycle C

Prayer:
Holy Spirit, during this special time of Lent help us remember that you are **our** guide and friend just as you were for Jesus when he felt lonely and unsure of what he was to do. Help us to trust in your whispers of love for us. In your name we pray, **AMEN.**

Readings
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalm 91: 1-2, 10-15 *Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble*
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

Reflection:
Today's Gospel begins right after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Remember that St. Luke tells us that when Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit of God spoke to him and said, "You are my beloved Son. I am very pleased with you." Jesus needed some time to think about what God's words to him might mean for his life, so he went where he could be alone. He went to the desert, an area where no one built houses or shops. He stayed there alone and talked to God and tried to listen to God's Holy Spirit speaking to him in his heart. *In the second reading today, St. Paul tells the people "the word of God is very near to you, it is on your lips and in your heart."*

He did ok for a while but then he got really hungry and lonely. The devil thought this was a chance to get Jesus to do things his way. The devil tells Jesus he can have whatever he wants if he just puts his energies into being powerful and famous instead of thinking about what God wants him to do for others. Jesus knows that these words don't sound like the words of God's Holy Spirit, so Jesus tells the devil he won't listen to him. Instead Jesus says he has the Word of God to listen to.

Jesus listened to scripture when he went to the temple just as we listen to the scriptures being read when we come to Church. Jesus also knew that he had the word of God in his heart. Those were the words he wanted to pay attention to. Not the devil's.

Discussion
Sometimes when people speak from their hearts, we can hear God's words to us.

Ask the class: *Can you think of anyone who talks to you and makes you feel like Jesus probably felt when he heard the Spirit of God say, "You are my beloved son. I am very pleased with you"?*

Invite children to draw a picture of such an experience. . . or a picture that shows how they *feel* when someone speaks to them in that way. Then ask them to show their picture and talk about it.



(Continued on page 2)

Do you ever hear words spoken to you that sound like the devil is trying to get you to do things his way, a bad way? Ask them to give examples.

For this sharing and for the next one have a piece of newsprint ready with the universal symbol for “not allowed” drawn on it (large circle drawn with a diagonal slash crossing through it). As they give their examples, write them in the circle so it will become a symbol of the kind of messages that are not from God.

Do you ever talk bad to yourself? Do you ever tell yourself you aren't enough—good enough, smart enough, fast enough. Do you ever NOT do something good because you tell yourself you won't do it right or be the best? Let them share examples if they are willing.

Then remind them that those kinds of words that they use against themselves are not God's words to them. When God speaks in our hearts, it sounds like the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism: “You are my beloved son/daughter. I am really happy with you.” When we talk like that to ourselves and others, we let God encourage us just like God encouraged Jesus.