



St Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, Michigan www.stvincentferrer.net

FEBRUARY 26, 2023 † FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

From The Pastor

Continuing the image of framing from last week, we can gain a greater understanding of the temptation of Jesus in the desert. Every life has a frame. As a person matures and changes, even transforms through life, the frame is re-made to reflect the current state of a person. This is the case in the life of Jesus as he matures into adulthood.

The Baptism of the Lord was a significant event that became the next frame in the identity and mission of Jesus. As it was true for Jesus, it is also true for all the baptized. Through his Baptism, the identity of Jesus is confirmed publicly in the voice of the Father: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The unchanging, yet evolving frame in the life of Jesus was the communion of love he shared with the Father. This confirmed identity makes his mission clear. As the human-Divine Son, beloved of the Father, Jesus is sent forth as the Anointed One to redeem the world.

The frame is now fluid and transforming. It is the Holy Spirit that drives Jesus into the desert. It is a time of testing, discernment, and acceptance of the Divine plan. Is Jesus up to the task? Is he ready and willing to face the evil that will confront him in the work of redemption? The first and primary action of the Cross is to defeat evil, then the forgiveness of sin. The work of Jesus in the desert mirrors the deception of the snake in the garden whose temptation caused the disobedience of Adam and Eve.

The temptation of Jesus is the devil's attempt to deceive and defeat God through the human weakness of the Son. Why must Jesus go through this temptation? Because of our human weakness and the wiles of evil, we are tempted and we often fail. Jesus reconciles human disobedience through his unwavering trust in the communion of love he shares with the Father, which we are now invited to share. The obedience of Jesus reconciles the disobedience of Adam/humanity.

Jesus suffers the temptations like any other human being. The first temptation is against human hunger. We are all hungry for something, and when we are hungry for whatever reason, we become vulnerable to temptation. Attempting to take advantage of this hunger, the devil tempts Jesus to turn stones into bread. Notice the deception. "If you are the Son of God turn these stones into bread." The devil is fully aware of who Jesus is and the work he is about. He is testing the strength of the Lord's will and identity. This is merely the lie of his deception. Jesus is ready. "One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Jesus is the eternal Word spoken by

the Father. This is his food and our food as well. Human comforts will never satisfy the union of Divine love.

The second temptation is one of power. Again, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down..." Now the devil uses scripture against Jesus, as it is written the angels will guard him against harm. Jesus will not use Divine power for his personal gain or comfort. All power is directed from and designed by the will of the Father. Jesus will never contradict the Father's will as he responds, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

Our human tendency for power comes from our ego to be in the up position before others. To have power over others is in defense of our vulnerabilities and fear of pain or diminishment. Such power divides, creates competition, and inequality in society that incites injustice. God is put in a lessor place.

The third temptation is the pride and desire of the devil to be God and to be worshipped by all. "All these I will give you if you prostrate yourself and worship me." Jesus is keen to the deception. Jesus knows the truth of the Father's love and no enticement on earth will draw him away from this union of Divine Oneness.

Human weakness often leads to the deception of idols and false illusions of power, pleasure, or fame. None satisfy for long. Emptiness and shame further deceive us away from the constancy and fidelity of Divine mercy and forgiveness. The pain of sin leaves us in the lie of separation from God. God has not moved, nor is God diminished by our sin. We are diminished by trying to fit into a frame that is not our own. Sin is disobedience against the love of the Father revealed in Jesus. The obedience of Jesus is fulfilled through the Cross that heals the deception of evil that is so often the root of sin.

Jesus won. He passed the test of temptation in the desert. He is now ready to go forth in public ministry that culminates on the Cross. The victory of Jesus becomes our victory. Now our challenge is to accept the gift of Christ and reframe ourselves in the promise of the Father's love. Enter the life of the Holy Spirit. Fight temptation with a life framed by your Baptism, the power of the Spirit who dwells in you, and Christ who died and rose for you. Jesus knows and understands human weakness. He suffered and encountered it all to defeat the lie of evil and to confirm the power and the truth of love. Confession is a good response to this gift.

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

Church doors open 1/2 hour before Mass begins

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm
in Adoration Chapel

Only one person allowed in chapel at a time. Persons seeking Sacrament of Reconciliation will be allowed in church to line up at 3:00pm



Live Streaming of Mass
Monday thru Thursday
8:00am and Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays
8:45am to 12:30pm

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

PARISH CONTACT INFORMATION

ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday

9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm

Friday - 9am to Noon - Closed Saturday & Sunday

Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

Faith Formation Office

**Hours: Monday thru Thursday Noon-3pm or
by appointment 248-398-1743**

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

**For information on Baptisms, RCIA and
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720**



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MONDAY, February 27, 2023

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req. by Mom

TUESDAY, February 28, 2023

8:00am Mass: Jonas Vytautas Ruzgys (2nd R.A.) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

WEDNESDAY, March 1, 2023

8:00am Mass: Gene Fox† req. by Bernadette Gutowski

THURSDAY, March 2, 2023

8:00am Mass: Janine Kairis (10th R.A.) req. by Kairis Family

SATURDAY, March 4, 2023,

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Stefanija Juska† (15th R.A.) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

Peter Conway req. by Mom

SUNDAY, March 5, 2023

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Betty Barger req. by Bill & Mary Beth Hochstetler

Jerry Gutowski† req. by Karen & Ron Piskor

William Olszewski† req. by Family

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

O Lord, make this Lenten season
different from the other ones. Let me
find you again. Amen

Henry Nouwen



READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF February 26, 2023

Sunday: Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Ps 51:3-6, 12-13, 17;
Rom 5:12-19 [12, 17-19]; Mt 4:1-11

Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Ps 19:8-10, 15;
Mt 25:31-46

Tuesday: Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19;
Lk 11:29-32

Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8;
Mt 7:7-12

Friday: Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26

Saturday: Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8;
Mt 5:43-48

Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22;
2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9

All are invited to join us in church or online
for Fr. John's Lenten Reflection Series

Hope in Changing Times

Wednesday evenings

March 1, 8, 15 & 22

To watch livestream visit our youtube
channel: St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church
(Madison Heights)



Connections

The second reading this Sunday is not easy to follow, especially when some of Paul's sentences are more like paragraphs. But you will notice that he makes several important connections: between sin and death, between Adam and Jesus, and between obedience and disobedience.

Sin, he says, is the cause of death—not just spiritual death, but physical death also. His point is that sin affects everyone, innocent as well as sinner. Of course, everyone is subject to death at some point, even if they haven't sinned. Sometimes the cause is immediate, such as a drunken driver who causes the death of an innocent person. Even a less serious sin can be a little "death" when it makes us feel that we are not as close to God as we could be. And sins that we might think are not a big deal, such as smoking, can lead to serious health problems.

The connection between Adam and Jesus is not so obvious. Adam was the first to bring sin and death into the world. Jesus is the first to bring forgiveness by his death on the cross. Adam was at the beginning of creation and Jesus is the beginning of a new creation. If we are all sons and daughters of Adam, we are also God's children, since Jesus taught us to call God our father.

The Letter to the Romans shows us how Jesus is different from Adam. Adam disobeyed God, while Jesus was obedient to his Father. Adam reminds me of a child who knows what he is supposed to do, but thinks that he can do the opposite and get away with it. The Gospel can be an example of that difference. The child likes to do things the easy way, while the adult will do them the right way. Satan can be thought of as trying to get Jesus to do things the easy way. When he tempts Jesus to turn stones into bread, he shows Jesus an easy way to feed the people. But Jesus takes a better way, when he feeds us with himself in the Eucharist. The devil says Jesus can throw himself off the temple as a dramatic way to attract followers; Jesus lets himself hang from the cross to draw people to himself. Satan promises the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will only worship him. But Jesus chose to be crowned with thorns and receive his kingdom when he rose from the dead.

Tom Schmidt,
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Virtual Soup Supper – March 1

Our first Lenten virtual soup supper charitable donations will be sent to the Ukrainian Fund for Ukrainian refugee children who are being educated at the Warren-based Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic School. This effort is administered through the Catholic Fund of Michigan, going directly to the school for this purpose. It is estimated that 100 refugee students are attending Immaculate Conception School this year. Along with our monetary donations, let's be sure to include these children and their families in our personal support prayers.

Charitable donations can be made at Fr. John's Lenten Reflection, at the Parish Office or online by visiting our website.

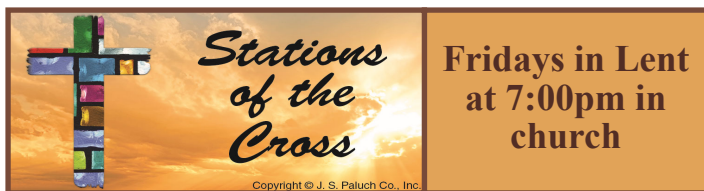
A SUPER-DUPER SOUP RECIPE

This recipe comes from Patricia Hastay,
a super-duper cook!

CORN CHOWDER SOUP

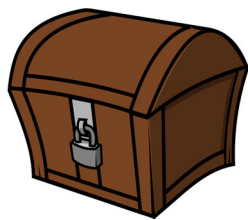
Ingredients: 3 c diced potatoes
1 c each: diced carrots, celery, onions
1 clove minced garlic
2 c chicken broth
1/4 c butter
2 c half & half
1 can cream style corn (or 2 c fresh corn in season)

- Saute potatoes, carrots, celery, onions and garlic in butter until veggies are soft, but not browned.
 - Add chicken broth, half & half, and cream style corn.
 - Simmer above until vegetables are tender, (or about 20 minutes).
 - At the end, add 1/2 c diced ham if desired.
- Serves about 6 hungry people.



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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION



In a few weeks' time, at the Chrism Mass of the diocese, fresh sacramental oils will be blessed and chrism consecrated for use in every parish. Olive oil is the main ingredient of chrism, but olive oil with some exotic additives that change its character and purpose. Rich balsam and perfumes separate chrism from the pantry. Food no longer, neither is this oil for grooming or toning muscles. It has a breathtaking aroma that is both alluring and enduring.

The prayer of consecration is a good meditation for the coming Lenten season since it focuses us on the goal of our journey, linking it with the olive-bearing dove at the end of Noah's stormy voyage of forty days. The dove signaled the birth of a new world, a society reborn from the wreckage of the old, drowned world of sin. At the end of our Lenten journey, the oil of chrism will be poured down in abundance on the brows of catechumens and infants, as well as on those to be confirmed or ordained. Lent puts us in touch with the hard edges of life in need of salvation, and the chrism of Easter joy redeems and restores.

—Rev. James Field,
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EVANGELICAL SERVICE CORNER

FOOD PANTRY

If you are in need of food, contact the parish office for information on local food pantries.

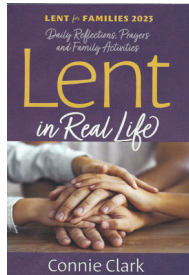
EYEGASSES & HEARING AID COLLECTION

We continue to collect hearing aids and eyeglasses for the Lions Club. Donation boxes are at the church entrances. Please do not leave eyeglass cases.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

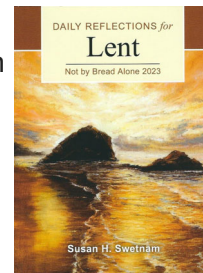
- Sunday: First Sunday of Lent
- Monday: St. Gregory of Narek;
Julian Calendar Lent begins
- Friday: St. Katharine Drexel; Abstinence;
First Friday; World Day of Prayer
- Saturday: St. Casimir; First Saturday

LENTEN REFLECTION BOOKLETS



Pick up a Lenten reflection booklet on the table near the Herbert Street vestibule door.

A \$2.00 donation is requested.



WHO WE ARE AND WHOSE WE ARE

The Lenten season is a fresh invitation to explore again who God is, who we are, and what it means to be human. We begin by hearing the tragic story of the first humans in the book of Genesis. As Paul describes in Romans, our struggles started when our ancestors broke the bond of unity with God, sought self-sufficiency, and grew apart from their true purpose and identity. In Matthew's Gospel, we see how Jesus resists the lure of living outside of unity with God. Jesus rejects false promises of possessions, power, and status. Instead, he puts his life in his Father's hands. As our model for living as a fully human person, Jesus demonstrates that we are created to live in relationship with and trust in God, and in harmony with and for all of creation.

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Prayer Requests

- ...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding a peaceful resolution to the Ukraine crisis.
- ...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from economic hardship and from complications caused by catastrophic weather
- ...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.
- ...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually and emotionally
- ...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.

Lord Jesus,

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally in these difficult times. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

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We are beginning the season of Lent, a great opportunity the Church gives us to renew our spiritual life and prepare for the greatest of all feasts, Easter - the resurrection! During this season of 40 days, which parallels the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, God calls us to conversion - to recognize our sins and seek his mercy

and forgiveness. This is how much God loves us! He forgives our sins and has mercy with us!

He also invites us to rest with Him. "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest." In order to rest in the Lord, to rest with the Lord, we have to see where it is that Christ rested. The Gospels tell us that the Son of Man had no place on this earth to rest his head. The Fathers of the Church tell us that Christ was able to rest when he accomplished the will of His Father - on the cross. Christ rested on the cross.

This Lent, Jesus is inviting us to rest with Him on the cross. How? By taking up our own crosses that God allows us to have. Jesus tells us "take up your cross and follow me." What is our cross? A situation that God has permitted in our life to call us back to him - to save us. The cross of Christ is the way of salvation, and it is through our own personal crosses that God is paving a way for us to go to Heaven.

What is your cross today? That your children have left the church? That you have a sickness? That you can't stand the shortcomings of your spouse? Take up your cross and follow me.

The world tells us not to take up the cross - "why suffer? Seek your pleasure, be comfortable, etc." But God invites us to take up our cross, to embrace our crosses, and lean on Him. The Devil cheats us by making us think that the crosses in our lives are a sign of failure, or something we have to overcome. These are lies. God invites us to take up our cross, to pray, fast, and give alms this Lent. And to recognize that through this cross, we can experience the resurrection - eternal life!

If you are suffering today, if you are in crisis, depressed, or unhappy, it's because you have come down from the cross. Jesus is inviting us back up to the cross, because He is with us on the cross. He has already conquered death, and His yoke is easy. Go back to your cross, where Jesus is waiting for you. Cry out to the Lord when the cross becomes heavy and He will make it light. Trust in Him, lean on Him, and you will find true happiness, freedom and love. Matthew Zinser, DRE

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP & SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Saturday, March 4, 2023 at 9am
Faith Formation Office in School

The men's fellowship group gathers for a scripture reflection/sharing every other Saturday at 9am in the Faith Formation Office of the school building. All men are welcome. No cost. No registration is required.



OUR FASCINATING FAITH
LENT

One of the liturgical reforms mandated at the Second Vatican Council was that the focus of the season of Lent should be restored as a time of preparation for—or renewal of—baptism. The bishops at the Council were aware of the fact that the origins of Lent as a distinctive liturgical season lay in the early centuries when the Church celebrated the sacraments of Christian initiation only once a year, at the Easter Vigil. In order to prepare those who were to receive those sacraments, a special period of preparation (eventually lasting forty days) gradually developed.

By the time of the Second Vatican Council, the initiatory character of Lent had long been forgotten, and it had become simply a time of penance focused on individual spiritual renewal. The introduction of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and the revision of the Lectionary after the Council have changed all of that. Now the Sunday scripture readings during Lent are very carefully selected with an eye to the journey of those preparing to be initiated at the Easter Vigil. Once again, the entire community is asked to undergo penance in solidarity with the candidates for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Thus, in order to appreciate fully the meaning of the readings during this season, the "filter" through which they must be heard is always the knowledge that we are helping to prepare our sisters and brothers in the catechumenate for their initiation at the Easter Vigil.

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Ministry Schedule		
March 4/5, 2023		
Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	T Riley	T Karolski
Reader #1	M Simmons	P Allen
Reader #2	R Pasiak	A Goll
EME	M Simmons	P Allen
	R Pasiak	M Black
	T Riley	M Waskowski
Greeters	L Proszkowski	D Vu
	K Heffner	B Turchin
	L Collins	J Turchin
	R Bertolini	T Lane



First Sunday of Lent

Ashes and gardens, failings and faithfulness, death and life. As we enter into Lent, we are invited to turn our thoughts, hearts, and lives toward God and God's ways, to turn away from the death of sin,

which separates us from God, and to embrace the gift of life offered in Christ, now and into eternity. Eve and Adam listened to the serpent rather than God who had given them a garden filled with beauty and abundance. On the contrary, Jesus stood firm in the face of temptation. This Lent, we ponder the choices we make in our daily lives, trust in God's mercy as we repent from sinfulness, and strengthen our commitment to discipleship, following Jesus' model of faithfulness.

TURN AWAY FROM SIN

Lent is a season in which we resolve to turn away from sin and turn toward Jesus. Turning away from sin requires us to admit that we miss the mark and fail to live as God desires. The first Sunday of Lent always includes a gospel account of Jesus facing temptation in the desert. Notice that it is not generic temptation Jesus meets, nor do we. Our temptations are personal, areas of particular weakness, situations in which, like Eve and Adam, we may rationalize and give in to sin rather than holding firm to what we know is right and just. Jesus gives us a model for meeting temptation: draw on the wisdom and truth found in sacred scripture and the teaching tradition of the Church to know what we must do or not do. Be strong and know that the Lord is with you as you resolve to be faithful.

TRUST IN GOD'S MERCY

"Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned." The refrain of today's Responsorial Psalm gives voice to our conviction that God is good and reminds us that we can trust in God's mercy as we face our sin, seek forgiveness, and resolve to avoid sin in the future. The more deeply we grow in relationship with Christ, the more sure of God's love we become. Rooted in this love, we can admit our failings and trust that God always desires to be close to us, drawing us into abundant life. Lent is a good time to seek God's mercy and forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation. We can take heart in the assurance that forgiveness awaits our repentant heart.

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FAMILIES OF PARISHES

OUR FAMILY - MASS SCHEDULES

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY

8:30 am and 4:30 pm (livestreamed)

SUNDAY

7:30 am, 9:30 am (livestreamed), 11:30 am

4:00 pm (Spanish-livestreamed), and 6:00 pm

WEEKDAYS (*Monday - Friday*)

6:30 am (livestreamed), 8:30 am

St. Justin, St. Mary Magdalen

1631 E. Elza Hazel Park, 48030 (St J)

50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030 (St MM)

SATURDAY - 4 pm - St. Justin

SUNDAY - 9 am & 11 am - St. Mary Magdalen

MON-WED & FRI- 9am - St. Justin

St. Mary

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30 pm

SUNDAY - 9 am, 11 am

MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30 am

WED - 12:10 pm

Weekly Offering



Offertory Env. Distributed & e-fund participants	718
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	99
Total Amount in Offertory Env. & e-funds rec'd	\$ 5,640.81
Loose Cash /Check Collection	148.00
Total	\$ 5,788.81
Budgeted Amount for Offertory	\$ 9,340.46
Energy	\$ 142.45
Church in Central & Eastern Europe	\$ 620.00

Oakland County Jail Ministry Seeking Volunteers

“For I was in prison and you visited me.”

The Oakland County Jail Chaplain's Office is a hub of activity responding to requests from inmates. We are in need of several volunteers to join us to work in the office, to visit inmates on a one-to-one basis, or by being a member of a team that meets in the evening for church services.

Want to learn more? Sign up and come to the two sessions of Jail Chaplaincy Orientation. It is important that you attend both days Monday, March 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Monday, March 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Registration is required.

Register by sending an email before March 13 to OCSOCLERGY@OAKGOV.COM Information needed: NAME, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL, CHURCH OR FAITH GROUP. You must bring picture id (e.g. driver's license) to both sessions.

Questions? Contact Mary Ann Simmons 248-543-3420.

Lent offers us the practical and effective weapons of fasting and almsgiving as a means of combating an excessive attachment to money. Giving not only from our abundance, but sacrificing something more in order to give to the needy fosters that self-denial which is essential to authentic Christian living.

Pope St. John Paul II

CATHOLIC PRAYER CORNER

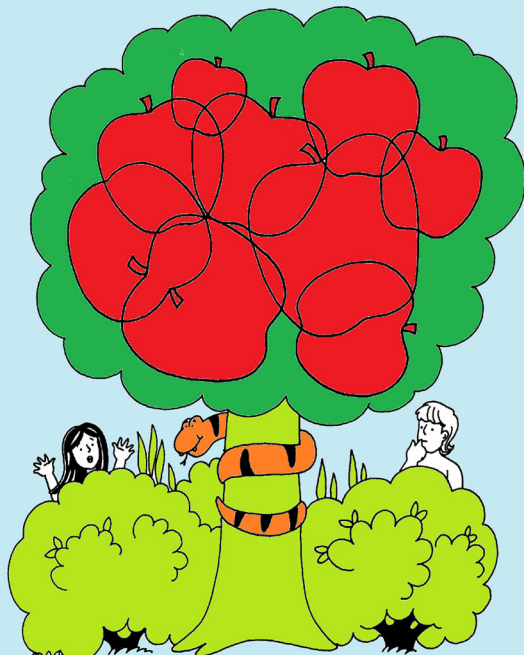
Prayer during Lent

Holy God,
now is the acceptable time to return to you. As we walk the path of these forty days, may we turn away from sin and embrace a life of goodness and truth. Strengthen us on our Lenten journey and keep us focused on the cross and resurrection of your Son, our Savior and Redeemer. He is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

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God's Word for Children

God told Adam and Eve they should not eat the fruit from a certain tree. But they disobeyed and ate from it anyway. How many apples can you count in the tree? Write the number on the tree trunk.



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First Sunday of Lent

While Jesus was in the desert the devil came and tempted him to do different things. Cross out all the rocks that have the letters G, K, X, and Z on them.

The remaining letters will spell out what the devil wanted Jesus to command the stones to become.

You can read the story in your Bible at Matthew 4:1-11.



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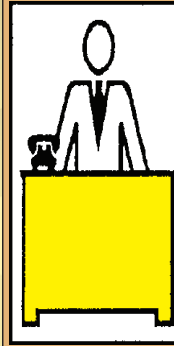
Elizabeth "Betty" McEvoy E.A.

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