

Lenten and Easter Bible Study



Feb 11

Feb 18

Feb 25

Mar 4

Mar 11

Mar 18

Mar 25

Let's start with a prayer

Holy Father,

Help us to submit ourselves more fully to Your divine will for our lives in our 40-day Lenten journey to repentance and spiritual cleansing in preparation for the celebration of Your Son's glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday. We pray that this Lenten journey, Father, brings about a change in our lives that leaves us, at the end of the journey, more committed to our faith and less drawn to the attractions of this earthly existence. As we begin our study of Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, help us, Lord, to follow in His footsteps by denying selfish worldly interests and by humbly showing our gratitude to You through acts of charity, self-sacrifice, and service to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We pray in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

1st Sunday in Lent Prayers



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,
one God, for ever and ever.*

Prayer over the people:

*May bountiful blessing, O Lord, we pray,
come down upon your people,
that hope may grow in tribulation,
virtue be strengthened in temptation,
and eternal redemption be assured.*

Through Christ our Lord.

Scripture Reading:



First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9: 8-15

Psalms 25: 4-5a; 6-7b; 8-9

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

Themes:

- **Covenant**
- **Baptism**
- **Overcoming the Powers of Evil**
- **Jesus' Ministry**





Covenant with Noah

Covenant Sign:

- “Bow” in the clouds.

Genesis 9:8-15



⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him,

*⁹ "As for me, I am establishing my **covenant** with you and your descendants after you,*

*¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the **ark**.*

¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

¹² God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:

Genesis 9:8-15...cont'd

13 I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds,

15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

*16 When the **bow** is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."*

17 God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

ALL creation?

It is why St. Paul wrote that it is through Christ's saving act of self-sacrifice that not only all humanity but all Creation can be freed from and redeemed by God's grace ([Rom 8:19-25](#)).

Creation - source of prayer

2569 Prayer is lived in the first place beginning with the realities of *creation*. The first nine chapters of Genesis describe this relationship with God as an offering of the first-born of Abel's flock, as the invocation of the divine name at the time of Enosh, and as "walking with God. Noah's offering is pleasing to God, who blesses him and through him all creation, because his heart was upright and undivided; Noah, like Enoch before him, "walks with God."⁶ This kind of prayer is lived by many righteous people in all religions.

In his indefectible covenant with every living creature, God has always called people to prayer. But it is above all beginning with our father Abraham that prayer is revealed in the Old Testament.

(see CCC 2417 on Stewardship. Respect for God's creation)

The BOW:

- The rainbow has seven colours. The number seven is one of the so-called "perfect" numbers in Sacred Scripture, reflecting fullness and perfection, especially spiritual perfection.
- Seven is a number connected to the first Creation event, the Flood, and the renewed creation after the Flood, founded on a renewed covenant.

In its *seven-colour* display, the rainbow recalls the seven days of the first Creation event and symbolizes the oath swearing necessary for a renewed covenant.

- In Hebrew, the number seven is *sheba* or *shava*, which also means "oath" or "to swear an oath." In Hebrew, to swear an oath is to literally "seven one's self." The number seven figures prominently in Genesis Chapter 1 in the Creation account and the formation of the covenant with Adam:

God rested on the 7th day ([Gen 2:1](#)), establishing it as His day to commune with man.

Covenant

A covenant solemnizes and confirms a relationship. A covenant addresses intangibles like loyalty, marriage, honesty, justice, etc., while a contract is concerned with property rights. Both members of a covenant union have obligations and promise to fulfill those obligations. In the Bible, covenants form family bonds.

Noah's Ark

Hebrew: "teba" (Basket of Moses); Latin: "arca."

In "typology" the Ark is Christ / Church the 8 people of Noah's family. Dimensions were 300 Cubits x 50 cubits. What does this mean?

8 is the number of Salvation: Question: How many sides does our baptismal font have?



Structure is an alphabetic acrostic

א Alef
ב Bet
ג Gimel
ד Delet
ה He
ו Vav
ז Zayin
ח Chet
ט Tet
י Yod
כ Kaf
ל Lamed
מ Mem
נ Nun
ס Samekh
ע Ayin
פ Pe
צ Tsadi
ק Qof
ר Resh
ש Shin
ת Tav

Psalm 25 (ESV)

Of David.

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
 2 O my God, in you I trust;
 let me not be put to shame,
 let not my enemies exult over me.
 3 Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
 they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
 4 Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
 teach me your paths.
 5 Lead me in your truth and teach me,
 for you are the God of my salvation,
 for you I wait all the day long.
 6 Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love,
 for they have been from of old.
 7 Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
 according to your steadfast love remember me,
 for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.
 8 Good and upright is the Lord;
 therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
 9 He leads the humble in what is right,
 and teaches the humble his way.
 10 All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
 for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.
 11 For your name's sake, O Lord,
 pardon my guilt, for it is great.
 12 Who is the man who fears the Lord?
 Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.
 13 His soul shall abide in well-being,
 and his offspring shall inherit the land.
 14 The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
 and he makes known to them his covenant.
 15 My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
 for he will pluck my feet out of the net.
 16 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
 for I am lonely and afflicted.
 17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged;
 bring me out of my distresses.
 18 Consider my affliction and my trouble,
 and forgive all my sins.
 19 Consider how many are my foes,
 and with what violent hatred they hate me.
 20 Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me!
 Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
 21 May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
 for I wait for you.
 22 Redeem Israel, O God,
 out of all his troubles.

Spoken to God
 To About God
 About God
 Spoken to God

I Trust in You
 Teach Me
 Remember Your Mercy
 God is Good
 Please Forgive!
 Fear God
 Turn to Me!

Central Theme: Verse 11

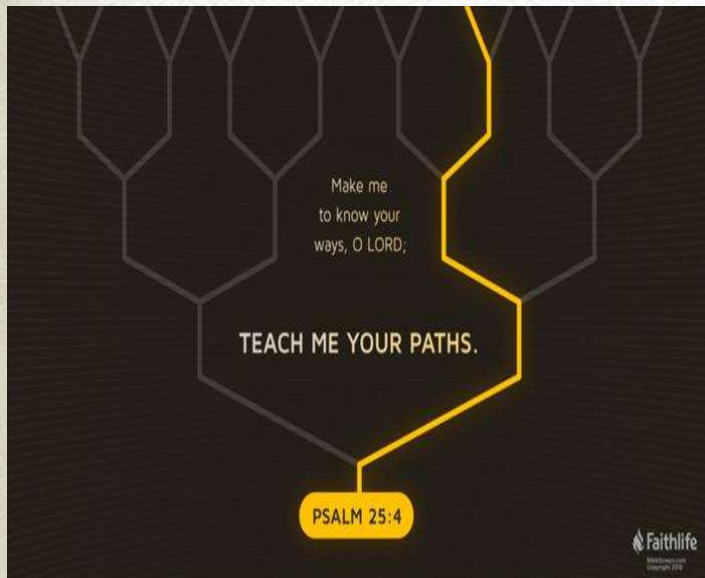
Psalm 25: Acrostic Style of Writing:

Hint see verse 1:
(Recall that David had sinned!)

Why Acrostic? The Acrostic style signifies **ORDER** to the 'Chaos' of broken covenant and sin.

God's mercy is restorative – Christ's passion re-creates and restores creation.

Psalm 25: 4-5a; 6-7b; 8-9



4. *Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.*

5. *Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation.*

6. *Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.*

7. *According to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!*

8. *Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in the way.*

9. *He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way. R.*

Psalm 25 attributed to David.

The psalm is in an acrostic pattern, and each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Reminds us of God's everlasting covenant relationship with David and us through David's descendant, Jesus of Nazareth ([2 Sam 7:16](#); [23:5](#); [Mt 1:1](#)).

The psalmist petitions the Lord to instruct him in the ways of righteousness; he acknowledges that God is his Savior (verses 4-5). He asks for God's forgiveness for past sins because he has confidence in God's compassion, love, and goodness (verses 6-7). In verses 8-9, the psalmist writes of how God responds to both sinners and the humble. The humble are those who confess their sins to the Lord. God instructs and leads the humble and repentant sinner on the path to salvation.

St. Augustine wrote concerning this psalm: "Moreover, the one who follows the Lord's paths, and sees that he has been set free through no merit of his own, and takes no pride in his own efforts, will draw nearer to the Lord; in times to come, he will avoid the severe judgment that will be handed down to those who question all these things, for he has experienced the mercy of the one who came to his aid" (St. Augustine, *Enarrationes, in Psalmos*, 24.10).





St. Peter the Apostle

(St. Peter's Basilica - Rome)

St. Peter was the first Pope.

The keys are a sign of the Papal authority.

[See Isaiah 22:20](#) / [Matthew 16:19](#)

1 Peter 3:18-22



18. Beloved: Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit,

19. in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison.

20 In former times these did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

1 Peter 3:18-22 ...cont'd



*²¹ Baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you — not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with Angels, Authorities, and Powers made subject to him.*

Christian Baptism



Link to Baptism

- ⑩ St. Peter wrote the Great Flood prefigured Christian baptism.
- ⑩ In Christian baptism, the faithful are saved through the spiritual waters as they receive the gift of new life and become a new creation through water and the Spirit ([Jn 3:3-5](#)).



The Prison?



Peter testifies that Jesus then led those who accepted His Gospel of salvation out of the "prison" of Sheol and into the gates of Heaven, opened for the first time since the Fall of Adam ([CCC 536](#), [1026](#)).

The Catechism teaches:

[CCC 633](#): "Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, hell, Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek.

[CCC 635](#): "Christ went down into the depths of death so that 'the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live' ..." (see [Jn 5:25](#); [Mt 12:40](#); [Rom 10:7](#); [Eph 4:9](#)).





Mark 1:12-15



The Temptation of Jesus

12 And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

13 He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,

15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

The Temptation of Jesus



In St. Mark's Gospel, the story of God's plan for Jesus' mission continues to unfold:

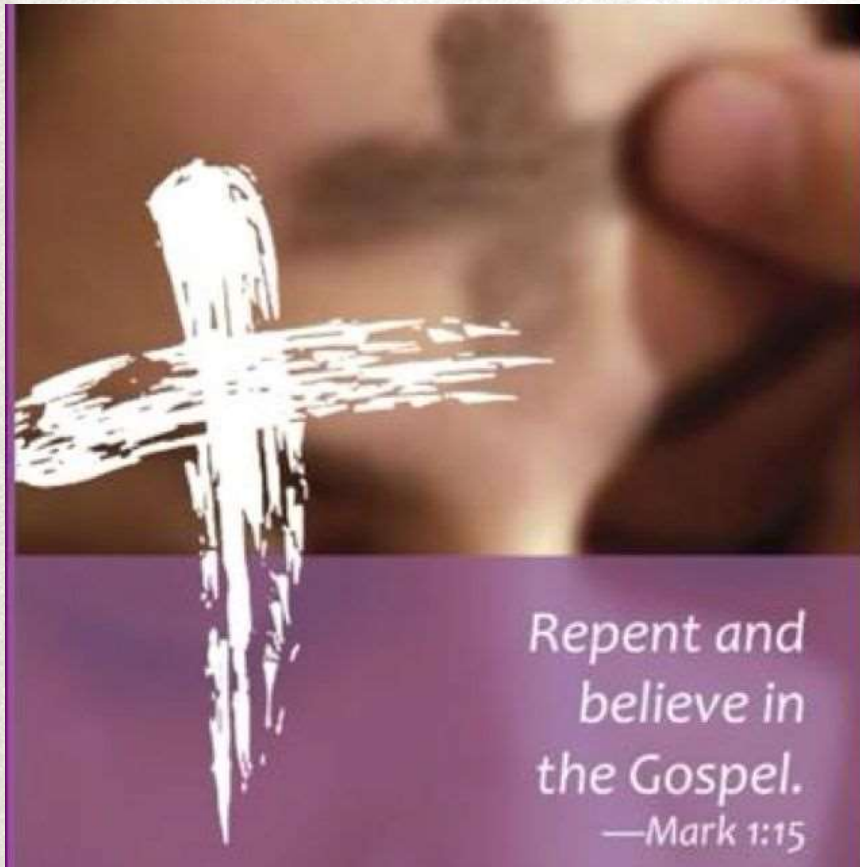
- The Holy Spirit drove Jesus into the desert.
- Satan tempted Jesus.
- Jesus defeated Satan's temptations.
- Angels ministered to Jesus among wild beasts, showing Jesus' authority over Heaven and earth (only in Mark's Gospel).

Jesus Was Tempted Like Adam:

- Like Adam and Eve in the first Creation, Satan tested Jesus, but then the experiences differ.
- Jesus is the new Adam who resisted Satan's temptations ([1 Cor 15:22, 45](#); [CCC 411](#)), and He is the new Adam of the new Creation.
- Israel fails in the desert, and wanders for 40 years and is denied the Promised Land. ([Num 14:34-35](#))
- Jesus' victory over temptation, sin, and death would usher in a new Israel and a new Edenic Sanctuary in the true Promised Land of Heaven ([CCC 877](#)). Adam's failure brought death and alienation from God, but the victory of Jesus brought eternal life and union with the Most Holy Trinity!

Galilean Ministry:

- Verse 14 mentions the arrest of St. John the Baptist.
- John the Baptist's arrest was the signal that his ministry had come to an end and Jesus' ministry must begin.
- Jesus was now thirty years old ([Lk 3:23](#)), the same age when His ancestor David became King of Israel ([2 Sam 5:4](#)).
- The Galilee was the perfect location for Jesus' ministry. The region was a crossroads for the Via Maris, the ancient trade route that came out of Egypt, extended along the Mediterranean coast, passed through the Galilee, and continued into Syria, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia. Jesus didn't have to go to the various neighboring Gentile nations where Jews lived because they came to Him in the three yearly pilgrimages to the Jerusalem Temple commanded in the Law of Moses ([Ex 23:14-17](#); [Dt 16:16](#); [2 Chr 8:3](#)).



CCC References:

[CCC 541](#) (Kingdom)

[CCC 1423](#) (Reconciliation)

[CCC 1427](#) (Conversion)

The Angelus Prayer

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

**Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with Thee;
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen**

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary. . .

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary. . .

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen