

# 1st Sunday of Lent (Year B)



## HOMILY

*Focal Points:* God has made an everlasting covenant with all creation. Jesus shows us how to resist temptation, and wants us to change our lives and believe in the Gospel.

*Outline / Ideas:*

## CREED

*Presider:* **Let us proclaim our faith in God who promised to protect and care for all creation:**

• **Do you believe in God, who always keeps promises?**

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in God, who . . .

• **Do you believe in Jesus, who is the one God promised to send to save us?**

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in Jesus who . . .

• **Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to resist temptation?**

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit who . . .

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

*Presider:* **God, you have made an everlasting covenant with us, and so we pray:** *(After the children have offered their prayers, you might also add petitions based on today's scripture texts. For example:)*

+ **For all the peoples of the earth, that they may know the Good News of God, we pray.**

*All:* O God, hear our prayer.

+ **For all the members of the church, that we may always believe in the Gospel, we pray.**

*All:* O God, hear our prayer.

+ **For us, our families, neighbors and friends, that we may always resist what is wrong, and keep the covenant that God has made, we pray.**

*All:* O God, hear our prayer.

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

## CLOSING PRAYER

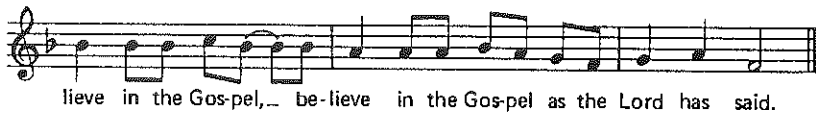
*Presider:* **O God, as we come to your Holy Table, may we resolve to change our lives and believe in the Gospel. This we pray in Jesus' name.**

*All:* Amen.

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

**NOTE:** Arrange to have the *Sunday Scripture Leaflets* given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets and the *Word Made Flesh, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal* throughout the week.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



## GOSPEL: *Mark 1:12-15*

*This is a reading from the Gospel of Mark.*

After his baptism,  
the Holy Spirit sent Jesus out into the desert.  
He stayed there for forty days  
and was tempted by Satan  
to do what was wrong.  
And the angels were with Jesus to help him.  
When Jesus returned to Galilee,  
he told everyone the Good News of God:

“The time has come!  
Change your lives  
and believe in the Gospel!”

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

## REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

After the first reading, you may wish to engage the children in the reading by asking questions such as:

- What did God say?
- Why do you think God chose a rainbow as a symbol of the covenant?
- What does God promise in this covenant?
- How do you feel about God’s promise?

The Psalm response for today is particularly appropriate. It should be one that the children take to heart and remember.

After the Gospel, ask the children:

- What did you hear in today’s Gospel?
- What did Jesus ask us to do?

When the children have shared their thoughts, summarize for them. Jesus says, “Change your lives. Believe in me.” Jesus asks us to follow him.

- What do you think Jesus wants us to change in our lives?
- How can we show Jesus that we believe in him?

Remind the children that the word “Gospel” means “Good News.”

- What is the Good News that Jesus asks us to believe in?

Help the children understand that we change our lives gradually. Jesus too was tempted, and so he knows that sometimes it is hard for us. But he is always there to help us when we try. Remember, God made a covenant with us and is always true to it.

Lent is a special time in the church. It is a time when we think even more about changing our lives and believing more in Jesus. How can we do that? Help the children focus on the reality of their everyday lives. They are not responsible for the sins of the world and cannot change things on a large scale. Help them focus on the small, but real, ways they can try in their own lives.

## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

YEAR B

### PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God in heaven,  
you put courage  
in the apostles  
by giving them a glimpse  
of the victory  
that would be won  
by your Son after his death.  
Make us always true to him,  
quick to overcome our fear,  
and trust in his resurrection.  
We ask you to do this  
through Jesus Christ,  
who lives with you  
and the Holy Spirit,  
forever and ever.

### FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

We live in a world broken by violence and evil.

Today's first reading assures us that nothing can take us from the love of God. God is on our side, and we have nothing to fear. Nothing that is now and nothing that is to come can separate us from God. Our Psalm response echoes this belief: "And when evil is around me, I have no fear." The Gospel gives us a glimpse of our future glory in the Transfiguration. In the midst of the brokenness in the world, we are called to recognize Christ as the beloved Son of God and to listen to him. With him on our side, we have nothing to fear in this world or the next.

### FIRST READING: *Romans 8:31-39*

*This is a reading  
from a letter written by Paul to the Romans.*

If God is on our side, who will be against us?  
Surely not God,  
who was willing to give up even Jesus  
so that we would be saved.  
God has saved us through Jesus  
and will always bless us.  
No one can take that away from us.

Who will keep us away from heaven?  
Surely not Christ Jesus,  
who died and was raised to life  
and is now with God to help us.

I am sure that nothing  
will ever take us away from the love of God.  
Not death, not anything in life,  
nothing now or in the future,  
nothing in all of creation  
will ever take us away from the love of God  
which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord!

*The Word of the Lord.*

### RESPONSE: *Psalm 27*

RESPONSE: *Gently*



O God, noth-ing can take us from your love, \_\_\_\_\_




noth - ing can take us from your love. \_\_\_\_\_ *Fine*

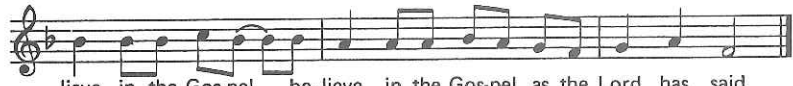
VERSES: \_\_\_\_\_ to Response

1. God, my light and my sal - va - tion, \_\_\_\_\_ you are my help. \_\_\_\_\_
2. And when e - vil is a - round me, \_\_\_\_\_ I have no fear. \_\_\_\_\_

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



"Lis - ten to my be - lov - ed Son." Be - lieve in the Gos - pel, - be -



lieve in the Gos - pel, - be - lieve in the Gos - pel as the Lord has said.

# 1st Sunday of Lent (Year B)

## LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

During the Sundays of Lent, your liturgical space should be simple. You will need the basics of a table, candle(s) and a lectionary with stand (the focus of the gathering space). Purple is the traditional color, though brown or grey coarse cloth, such as burlap, could be used. You might consider using a cloth as a hanging or banner, and leave the table bare. A bare tree branch in clay pot kept in place with dark rocks or stones would make an appropriate statement.

You might display the *SUNDAY Scripture Poster*, and illustration of the first reading, showing Noah's ark. The poster could be sent home with a different family each week to color for the next celebration.

## CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG

You might consider using the same gathering song until Passion Sunday. *Suggestions:*

- "Kyrie Eleison" (Vol. 1 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #16 & #17, Treehaus Communications.)
- "Psalm 91: Be With Me, Lord" (Vol. 1 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #18, Treehaus Communications.)
- "The Great Sunday Entrance Litany (Kyrie)" (Vol. 2 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #14, Treehaus Communications.)

You might wish to follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

## FIRST READING *Genesis 9:8-15*

The reader may be either a child or an adult: in either case, this person should know ahead of time in order to prepare carefully. This should be read slowly, quietly and reverently, building volume as the text proceeds.

## PSALM RESPONSE

The psalm is not only a response to the first reading; rather "responsorial" is descriptive of the way the psalm is prayed, with the children responding to the cantor or leader. You might use the same psalm response until Passion Sunday, or use the response provided in musical form for this Sunday, Psalm 89, found in the *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year B, page 26. *Other suggestions:*

- "Lenten Acclamation" (Vol. 1 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #23, Treehaus Communications.)
- "Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful" (Vol. 1 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #39, Treehaus Communications.)
- "Psalm 51: Create in Me a Clean Heart" (Vol. 2 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #18, Treehaus Communications.)

- "Be With Me, Lord" (Vol. 2 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #19, Treehaus Communications).

You might wish to follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Suggestions:*

- "Change Your Lives and Believe" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children and SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year B, page 27, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle B, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).
- "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (Vol. 1 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #45, Treehaus Communications).
- "Lenten Gospel Acclamation" (Vol. 2 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #15, Treehaus Communications).

You might wish to follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

## GOSPEL *Mark 1:12-15*

Usually the presider reads the Gospel. The passage is brief, but full of information, so it should be read slowly and deliberately, giving pause where there is punctuation.

## HOMILY OUTLINE

See *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year B, pages 26 and 27 for "Focus of Readings" and "Reflecting on the Readings with Children." When reflecting on the scriptures with children we take our cues from the children's responses. In so doing, you might use some of the questions below to enrich their appreciation of God's word:

WE LISTEN TO GOD SPEAK

- What might the children in the assembly hear God saying to them in today's readings?
- How might you engage the children in the biblical experience with open-ended questions?

*Concerning the first reading (Genesis):*

- What do you suppose a covenant is? Why do you think God would want to make a covenant with the descendants of Noah?
- Why do you think God would not want to send a flood again to destroy the earth?
- Why do you think God chose the rainbow as a sign of the covenant? What do you think this means?

*Concerning the Gospel (Mark):*

- What do you suppose the baptism of Jesus was like for him?
- Why do you think the Holy Spirit sent Jesus out into the desert so long?
- What do you think the desert was like for Jesus?
- Why do you suppose Jesus stayed in the desert so long?
- Why do you think Satan tempted Jesus to do what was wrong?
- What do think it was like for Jesus to be tempted by Satan?
- Mark says that the angels were there to help Jesus. What do you think Mark is talking about? What was this like for Jesus?
- Why do you think, when Jesus returned to Galilee, that he told everyone the Good News of God? What do you think that means?
- Jesus tells the people to change their lives? What do you think Jesus is talking about?

WE REFLECT ON THE REIGN OF GOD

- How can you invite the children to look out of the biblical experience at their lives today?
- How can you use the biblical imagery of today's readings to explore with children their experience of God's presence in our lives today?

*Concerning the first reading:*

- What does it mean to you to hear that God has made a special covenant with you?
- When you see a rainbow, what do you think about?
- What does it mean to you to hear that God has made a covenant with all living creatures?

*Concerning the Gospel:*

- What does your baptism mean to you?
- What is it like for you to go to a strange place?
- What is it like for you to be tempted? What happens to you?
- How do you know if Satan appears to you in order to tempt you?
- How can you know that the angels are with you to help you when you are tempted?
- What is the Good News of God for you? How does it work out for you in your life?
- What do you think it would mean for you to change your life and believe in the Gospel?

## 1st Sunday of Lent (Year B)



### WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

- How might you attune yourself to encourage the children's own creative responses to God's word?
- How might the Spirit be moving the children to respond to God's word in praise and thanksgiving?

*Concerning the first reading (Genesis):*

- What can you do to show your joy about the everlasting covenant God has made with you?
- What can you do to help you remember the covenant God has made with you?
- How can you help others know about this covenant?

*Concerning the Gospel:*

- What can you do to help you resist temptation?
- What can you do to help you believe in the Gospel?

### CREED

Invite the children to profess their faith by creedal statements that echo the readings. Reflect on what the readings say about God as Creator, Jesus as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life. Express these statements so that the children can give their assent to them. This week's readings, for example, offer these options:

- God, who has made a covenant with us that will last forever.
- Jesus, who brings us the Good News of God.
- Holy Spirit, who helps us to respond to the Good News of Christ.

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

The proclamation of the word leads us to change our lives and express our gratitude in the celebration of the Eucharist. After the children have offered their prayers and concerns, you might also offer petitions based on the scripture texts. Some guidelines for preparing petitions based on the scripture texts are these:

- Rather than telling God what to do, ask God for guidance in doing God's will.
- Rather than expecting God to take action, ask God to move and strengthen us to do what God wants done.
- Use inclusive language.
- Let our prayer reflect the needs of our world, our church, and our local communities (families, neighbors).

In formulating the prayers, you might draw from the verbs or "action words and biblical images" in this week's readings. For example: *making a covenant, last forever, sign, remember the covenant, sent Jesus out, tempted to do what was wrong, angels were with Jesus to help, told the Good News, change your lives, believe, in the Gospel.*

*NOTE: Arrange to have the Sunday Scripture Leaflets given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets through the week to continue reflecting prayerfully on God's Word. In addition, emphasize the use of the Word Made Flesh, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal, pages 42 and 43, (Treehaus Communications, Inc.) as a way of assisting the family's deeper reflection on God's word at home.*



Liturgy Celebration for February 26, 2012 • 1st Sunday of Lent • Year B

**CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG**

• “The Great Sunday Entrance Litany (Kyrie)” (Vol. 2 *Sing God A Simple Song*, #14, Treehaus Communications).

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Presider:* O God, you promised to protect every creature with your love. You sent Jesus to show us your care. Help us to trust in Jesus and follow his way. This we pray in Jesus’ name.

*All:* Amen.

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

**FIRST READING**     *Genesis 9:8-15*

*Today’s Reader:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Presider:* Today, we hear something wonderful God has promised.

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

**PSALM RESPONSE**

*Presider or Song Leader:* We are grateful to God for making a covenant with us that lasts forever, and so we sing:

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

• “Change Your Lives and Believe” (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide*, Year B, page 27, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children’s Liturgy of the Word*, Cycle B, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

*Substitutions / Additional Notes:* \_\_\_\_\_

**GOSPEL**     *Mark 1:12-15*

*Today’s Reader:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Preliminary Comments:* Mark tells us what happened when the Holy Spirit sent Jesus out into the desert.

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

### YEAR B

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Protect us, our God,  
from all the evil  
that would attract us  
away from your love.  
May we be loyal to you  
and worship you  
above all the things  
which you have made.  
We ask you to do this  
through Christ, our Lord.

#### SEASON OF LENT

All of the readings of Lent focus on our brokenness and God's fidelity. Some of the readings focus on the redemption yet to come, others on our need to renew our acceptance of that redemption. All of them, in the context of liturgy, call us to examine our lives, acknowledge our sin, and trust in the love and saving power of our faithful God. All of them invite us to renew our baptismal promises at the Paschal Vigil.

#### FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

We live in a world of broken promises.

Our readings for this first Sunday focus on the fidelity of God and our share in that fidelity through baptism. Our first reading is the conclusion of the story of the flood. The rainbow, a sign of "the covenant made with all living creatures," reminds us that God is always faithful. In the Gospel, Mark recalls Jesus' baptism and reminds us that even baptism does not exempt us from the temptation of straying from the covenant. Jesus meets the test and emerges victorious. His victorious proclamation is a call to us to renew our own fidelity to the covenant and to our baptismal promises, by changing our lives and believing in the Gospel.

#### FIRST READING: *Genesis 9:8-15*

*This is a reading from the book of Genesis.*

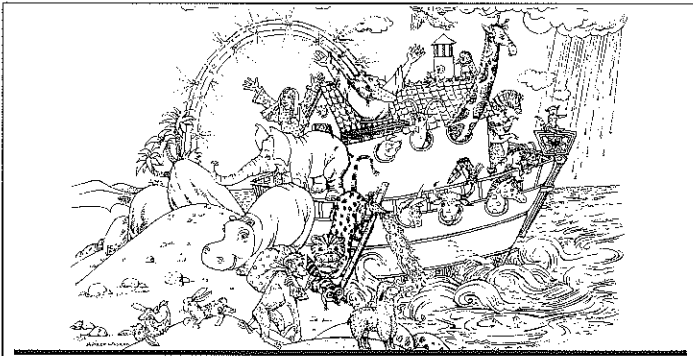
God said to Noah and his children:

"I am making a covenant with you,  
and with your children for all time,  
and with every living creature on earth.  
This is my covenant with you  
that will last forever:  
I promise that never again  
will a flood destroy the earth  
and all living creatures.  
As a sign of this covenant,  
I am putting my rainbow in the sky.  
When I bring clouds over the earth,  
and a rainbow appears in the sky,  
I will remember the covenant  
I have made with you,  
and with all living creatures."

*The Word of the Lord.*

#### RESPONSE: *Psalm 89*





**LITURGICAL SEASON BACKGROUND**

Today we begin the forty-day preparation of the celebration of the Resurrection. These days echo the forty years in which the people of God wandered in the wilderness of Sinai before entering the Promised Land. Since the earliest days, the church also has associated this period of time with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry. So the key word for Lent is preparation. In the past, one of the ways people prepared for Easter was to practice rigorous self-denial. There is always much to be said for putting away some of the excessive pleasures and consumption of our times, and the somberness of Lent has a place. It helps us enjoy more fully the celebration with which it ends. However, it is important to remember that the English word Lent comes from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "spring." There is a certain excitement to Lent which builds as the days lengthen, the weather warms and Easter nears.



**1ST SUNDAY OF LENT**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**



**RESPONSE: Psalm 89**

Change your lives and believe in him. Believe in the Gospel, as the Lord has said.

Your love and your promises are true, O my God, are true

**EVALUATION**

We are providing this brief evaluation form for use after you have celebrated this Sunday's liturgy with the children.

Notes for future reference:

What went well?

What needs improvement?

Many families do something special during Lent. You might spend some time with your children discussing their family's Lenten observances, and letting them share what Lent means to them.

**SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND**

The Noah story in *Genesis* is a theological reflection on the nature of humanity, and the relationship between God and us, God's creatures. It is a wonderful and highly symbolic statement our earliest spiritual forebears made about how they understood the relationship between God and the world around them. Today, we hear a glorious promise from God following the terrible flood of which the rainbow is the sign. The rainbow is a powerful image even in our secular world today. For who does not marvel at a rainbow when it appears in the heavens? The rainbow is a wonderful event, quite capable of carrying God's promise, even today. For that promise is fulfilled in the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, about which there is equal excitement come Easter Sunday. Ask your children about their experiences with rainbows, and be prepared for a lively and excited conversation. It may lead to a reflection on other ways they see the promises of God in nature.

In our reading from *Mark*, Jesus experiences the depths which arise from serious temptation while fasting and praying in the desert forty days (a Semitic expression meaning "a long time"). Satan comes in the loneliness and isolation which Jesus experiences. Jesus is urged to abandon the ministry which lies before him, in effect, to take short-cuts, and the easy way to fame and glory. But Jesus knew he was not alone, and the angels, messengers of God, helped Jesus. Your children will know about temptation, for they are all, to varying degrees, living with its myriad forms each day. It can be of great help to them to know that God is always ready to help them overcome it.