

PrairieLand Parish

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude – Welcome - Announcements

Opening Meditation

We are on the threshold of the season of Lent – an opportune time to talk about temptation. We are at the very beginning where we stop and think, “Do we really want to do this or not?” And if we do, what does that mean for our lives for the next six weeks? Can we still function in normal society even though we’ve gotten this Lent journey thing going?

We will begin this first Sunday with a traditional reading from Luke 4:1-13. The temptation is in the wilderness – a great starting place, don’t you think? We will get a glimpse into the nature of evil. We will come to understand the person of Jesus and the nature of Christ, and we get a taste of the power of temptation.

So, we begin our journey with Christ in the wilderness because that is where we live. The Spirit led him out (and Mark’s version said the Spirit drove him out) so that he could experience what we experience. He was, as the letter to the Hebrews reminds us, “tempted in every way as we are.” He was out there hungry and hurting because we are hungry and hurting. And he was tempted by the thought of shortcuts because we are tempted by that very thing.

This is what Jesus teaches us with his experience in the desert: half a mind is not enough. Jesus invites us to live fully engaged, to think through the implications of our actions as well as our intentions. He encourages us to meet the challenges of this world wrapped in the Word, confident in our relationship with God, certain in the presence of the Spirit with us always.

As we gather today, let us do so with our own temptations in our thoughts and our want for repentance on our breath.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus began his ministry to the world,
led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

**As we begin our Lenten journey,
let us be led by the Spirit,
even into the uncomfortable places.**

In those forty days, and in that place,
Jesus was faced with hunger, doubt
and temptation.

**As we seek to follow Jesus,
we would be led,
even into the uncomfortable choices.**

Jesus left the wilderness,
faithful and obedient to God,
rejoicing in the One in whom he trusted.

**As we continue on our path to faithfulness,
we will be led by our Christ,
rejoicing in the Lord our God**

OPENING PRAYER

**Jesus, you have known us from the beginning of time,
you have known us in the depths of our dreams and in the darkness of our shame,
you know us as your beloved.**

**Help us to own that core identity more and more in this season of repentance and
mercy.**

**Give us the rock-solid assurance of your unwavering faith in us
as we seek the same in you. Amen**

Praise Hymn

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... Luke 4:1-13

New Revised Standard Version

The Temptation of Jesus

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. 3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." 4 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

5 Then the devil[a] led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And the devil[b] said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." 8 Jesus answered him, "It is written,

*'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.'"*

9 Then the devil[c] took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written,

*'He will command his angels concerning you,
to protect you,'*

11 and

*'On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"*

*12 Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 13 When the
devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.*

Word of God, For the People of God, **Thanks Be to God!**

Children's Moments

Faith Hymn

Meditation

Joys/Concerns

Pastoral Prayer/Lord's Prayer

WILDERNESS – A PRAYER FOR LENT

Forty days alone, a wilderness of thoughts,
tempting and inviting thoughts,
which could so easily have distracted you
from your task, your mission, your vision.

Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned
to all that had to be done, despite a time constraint
that to our eyes would have seemed hopeless.

We too live in stressful times.
Demands are made of our time,
that leave so little
for the important things of life.
We are easily distracted
in the wilderness of our lives,
by every call to go this way or that,
to turn stone to bread
leap from mountains,
and do all that would keep us from the truth.

We listen to the voices of this world,
and ignore the one who endured all this
and so much more,
and emerged triumphant,
that we might not have to suffer so.

Forgive us, Father,
when we get distracted from our task.
Forgive us those times when we try
to be all things to all men,
and fail to be anything to anyone
In the name of the one who gave his life,
so that we might know God, abundance, and life eternal we come to you in prayer...

Offertory/Doxology/Prayer

Mighty God, as we remember the strength of Jesus facing the temptation offered by the devil, we remember too clearly how the temptations of food, of authority, and power have overcome us. We've been tricked to believe our wants were needs and more is always better. May we offer our gifts to you this day with generosity and gratitude; strengthen us to resist temptation that would present security or power in anyone but you. In Christ, we pray. Amen. (Luke 4:1-13)

***Departing Hymn**

INTO LENT BLESSING

.May the dust of the wilderness hold our footprints Lovingly - shaped as they are by your hurt, for dust remembers

May the journey into wilderness unfold Honestly, - for honesty is the gift your soul recognizes as you

May your time in this wilderness be shaped by space rather than minutes so, there is time enough for all of you

May the stones in this wilderness cry out your name loudly that your spirit recognizes the voice that has been calling you always

And may you know this wilderness has been expecting you and you find between the stones a promise growing

Postlude