

As Jesus was ever faithful to his father's will and to his vocation to bring the Good News, we too are promised the strength to resist temptation and be true to our faith.

*Repent,
and believe
the Good News*



Into the Wilderness

Lent is a time to respond to that hunger which lies at the core of our being, the hunger for a deeper connection with the Creator, the hunger to experience freshness in our lives, the hunger for what we truly long for. What better place to work all this out than "the wilderness"? From time to time, we are landed in the wilderness. Sometimes it is an unpleasant experience and at other times we crave it, in response to a deep desire to step back from the day-to-day and make space in our lives for reflection. In the short passage we read from Mark today, we see that this is Spirit-led, the same Spirit that descended on Jesus at his baptism and 'immediately drove him out into the wilderness'. In the wilderness we can become vulnerable, thoughts and feelings can attack us like "wild beasts". But we should not be afraid; we also read that 'angels ministered' to Jesus; he is not alone.

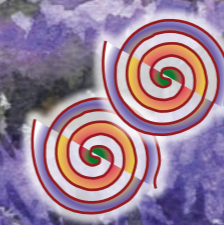
There is a Zen proverb, 'Let go or be dragged', and no one wants to be dragged around the place. Lent invites us to embrace this wilderness time. As we fast from things that are not life-giving for us, we are also actively making space for God to breathe life and love into our hearts once more. We do this in the trust that God who loves us wants us to choose life and to clear out the blocks that stand in our way. This is 'good news', a true *metanoia* (a change of heart). God's Kingdom is being fulfilled in us and around us, not yet complete, but with every trip into the wilderness we edge closer to that reality. May this Lenten season be a period of grace for all of us.

These reflections are extracts from *The Deep End – A Journey Through the Sunday Gospels in the Year of Mark*, Messenger Publications, Dublin, 2023. (Jane Mellett and Triona Doherty).

Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

Lent is a time when we can look at Jesus everyday, and learn that God Our Father is full of Love. Jesus' "Great News" is that God loves every single person, and me too, in a special way. God can never be angry. Jesus helps us to grow in love, because God is Love. We grow in love when we put others first, like giving a seat up on the bus, respect people on footpaths, and in shops, offering to help at home, and share with others that we meet in school and sport, and with neighbours.



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right and just.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.
We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

One does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed now with heavenly bread, by which faith is nourished, hope increased, and charity strengthened, we pray, O Lord, that we may learn to hunger for Christ, the true and living Bread, and strive to live by every word which proceeds from your mouth. Through Christ our Lord.

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.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
Amen.

Go in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

All bow for following three lines:
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters,
May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Give us the right dispositions, O Lord, we pray, to make these offerings, for with them we celebrate the beginning of this venerable and sacred time. Through Christ our Lord.

- Remember your mercy, Lord, and the love you have shown from of old. In your love remember me, because of your goodness, O Lord. **(R)**
- The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray, he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor. **(R)**

SECOND READING 1 Peter 3:18-22

A reading from the first letter of Peter.
Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

**The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!
Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!**

GOSPEL Mark 1:12-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him. After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
You bring pardon and peace to the sinner: Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
You bring light to those in darkness: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
May almighty God have mercy on us. **Amen.**

OPENING PRAYER

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.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Genesis 9:8 - 15

A reading from the book of Genesis.
God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.' God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

**The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 24:4-9

R. Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.

- Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour. **(R)**