

February 21, 2021
1 Lent B
St. Mary's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 491, Ramona, CA 92065

Opening Hymn:

BCP, page 355

Blessed the Lord who forgives all our sins.
People God's mercy endures forever. Amen.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly
love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Look Around You, Can You See, Kyrie Eleison, J.Page-Clark Sung and played by Rob and Deb
Lewallen

Look around you; can you see. Times are troubled, people grieve. See the violence, feel the
hardness. O my people, weep with me.

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison

Walk among them; I'll go with you. Reach out to them with my hands. Suffer with me and
together, we will serve them, help them stand.

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison

Forgive us, Father; hear our prayer. We would walk with you, anywhere. Through your
suffering, with forgiveness, take your life into the world.

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison

The Celebrant then says
The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Let us pray.

Collect

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan: Come quickly to
help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us,
let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Genesis 9:8-17

God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, 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. 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." 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: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 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. 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." 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."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people
Thanks be to God

Psalm 25:1-9

Ad te, Domine, levavi

- 1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- 2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.
- 3 Show me your ways, O LORD, *
and teach me your paths.
- 4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.
- 5 Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.
- 7 Gracious and upright is the LORD; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

8 He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.

9 All the paths of the LORD are love and faithfulness *
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

1 Peter 3:18-22

Christ also 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, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times 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. And 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, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Thanks be to God

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark

Glory to you Lord Christ

Mark 1:9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ

Sermon:

1 Lent B February 21, 2021
Gen. 9:8-17 Ps 25:1-9
1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:9-13

The first Sunday of Lent introduces to us the temptation of Jesus Christ for forty days in the wilderness. I think that it useful to consider the symbolic importance of this for the New Testament writers, and also how the later church came to assign forty days to the season of Lent.

What did Paul say about temptation? No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

In the Epistles of Hebrews it is written: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.

The New Testament writers believed that Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us. And God was with us authentically because he was tested as we are, and yet he remained completely faithful to his Father.

St. Paul calls Jesus the second Adam. Adam got blamed for the human fate of sin because in his naivete, he and Eve got tricked by the manifestation of Satan in the Garden of Eden, the wily serpent.

The second Adam, Jesus arrived in the state of humanity being evicted from the Garden of Eden. Jesus did not have a perfect environment to deal with the trickster; he was summoned by the Spirit of God after his baptism into the lonely wilderness with the wild beasts. He fasted for 40 days and his inner life was made completely vulnerable to the accusing and persuasive powers of this very slick crooked lawyer, the devil, a parasite that could form upon the inner life of Jesus, and all people.

The Gospel writers believed that Jesus was a hero in his time of trial so that he provided for all who followed him, the example, but also the one who as the Risen Christ would be the higher power accessible to all people in their time of trial.

We may be forgiven if we are confused about the notions of temptation and trial. In the traditional "Our Father," we say, "And lead us not into temptation." And in the contemporary translation of the "Our Father," we say, "Save us from the time of trial." The one Greek word is translated by two different English words, temptation and trial, and these words have different nuances in English.

Temptation seems to mean that we can easily be tricked into coveting, or wrongly focusing and acting out upon wrongly directed desire. We know that moral life involves learning delayed

gratification and impulse control. Laws exist to teach us what the practice of delayed gratification and impulse control.

So, what does temptation involve? It involves mistiming. Sin is essentially, doing something at the wrong time or for the wrong number of times. The other Gospel accounts of the temptation of Jesus indicate that Satan tried to get Jesus to mistime his obedience to God regarding food or physical need, fame or glory and how he would die. "Throw yourself off the pinnacle of the temple; the angels will catch you." Temptation in our English language refers to human ability to handle impulse control and that involves human choice.

The word trial has a different meaning. Trial means tests or ordeals which face us over which we have no choice. The pandemic is a trial. The current severe cold weather in Texas and the South is a trial.

I think the way trial and temptation get conflated is that we can understand the entire human condition of living in the imperfect conditions of sin which is experienced in the significant events of social and natural disharmony as being the big trial of life itself.

The state of sinful conditions is the trial of living and within this state of disharmony, we can be willfully out of control, but also events in nature can be totally out of our control and force us to lose our faith in God who is good and well-disposed towards us.

We have fires, earthquakes, hurricane, freezing cold, the pandemic, people living in poverty, racial injustice and Noah experienced the flood. Noah went through the trial and in the end received the gift of a rainbow which essentially was saying, "I, God do not personally destroy through Nature but I share freedom with everyone and everything which accounts for the conditions of harmony and disharmony."

God lays out the conditions of freedom to allow all manner of wonderful harmonies and terrible disharmonies. The condition of freedom is the big test. And we have to learn how to prevail in the varieties of little tests which face us in the specific circumstances of our lives. We have the freedom of self-control so as not to mistime what we do and say in our lives.

And we have the promise that God in Christ has gone through the biggest human test of all, the test of death. In fact, the Epistle of Peter states that Jesus became an evangelist to the spirits in the grave, so that Jesus used the experience of death itself to let God's salvation be known.

The temptation and trial of Jesus is presented to us because the Gospel is that God is with us completely in everything, including death itself. Death itself and our deaths will be only another occasion for the salvation God.

Let us look to Jesus as we can know him now to be the higher power of the Risen Christ to give us impulse control to regulate the timing of the words and deeds of our lives. And let us know that Jesus has gone to death and back to identify fully with the trial of human experience.

As we pray, deliver us from temptation and save us from the time of trial, let us know that it does not mean being exempt from temptation or trials; what it means is that we can always come out of temptation and out of the trial into a fuller experience of salvation. Why, because we are simply following Jesus who leads us through everything. Amen.

The Nicene Creed (page 357)

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
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.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People:

Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our Neighbor
Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all
goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in
eternal life. Amen.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you

Anthem: Hymn # 142, Lord, who throughout these forty days,

St. Flavian alternating with Faure's Pavane

St. James Press, ID 21254

Lord, who throughout these forty days,
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins,
And close by Thee to stay.

As Thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the victory win,
Oh, give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.

As Thou didst hunger bear and thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and chiefly live
By Thy most holy Word.

And through these days of penitence,
And through Thy Passion-tide,

Yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesu! with us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering overpast,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last!

Doxology: Sung by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was tempted in every way as we are, yet did not sin. By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for him who died for us and rose again. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Sanctus, S-130, in the Hymnal, F. P. Schubert Setting, arr. R. Proulx
Sung and played by Joshua Charney

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Memorial Acclamation:

Sung and played by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Led by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion Anthem: Lord for Thy Tender Mercy's Sake
Richard Farrant, St. James Press, ID 21254

Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake,
Lay not our sins to our charge.
But forgive that is past,
And give us grace to amend our sinful lives.
to decline from sin, and incline to virtue,
That we may walk in a perfect heart,
Before thee now and evermore.
Amen.

Post Communion Prayer (BCP, page 365)

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction:

Dismissal:

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: Thanks be to God!

Closing Hymn: What a Friend We Have in Jesus
Played by Stanley Smith on the hammer dulcimer

What a friend we have in Jesus
All our sins and griefs to bear
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer
Oh, what peace we often forfeit
Oh, what needless pain we bear
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged
Take it to the Lord in prayer
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer

Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge--
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.