



## **First Sunday of Lent**

This First Sunday of Lent we are at the beginning of our 6 week journey with Jesus through the wilderness and into His Passion to rise with him again at Easter.

So let's find time today – say 20 mins - to start our journey.

Begin by settling yourself into a chair. Turn off the TV, the mobile and...and ....

But have something ready to connect you to Youtube for the music!

To help you focus, you might like to light a candle.

Become aware of your breathing... breathe in the love of God and breathe out everything else. Relax and open your heart to God.....

In the Gospel, (Mark 1:12-15), today we read that Jesus was baptised in the Jordan and when he came out of the water he heard a voice from heaven saying:

***'You are my Son, the beloved, with you I am well pleased.'***

Just for a few minutes imagine that same voice saying to you:

***'You are my daughter/son, my beloved, I am really pleased with you.'***

Rest in that knowledge, in that certainty.....

Have you ever driven through a ghost town or found yourself in a part of the country that has been left to go wild and feels neglected and un-cared for?

In today's Gospel reading we hear that after his baptism the Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness which was a wild, uncultivated, uninhabited and inhospitable area that was neglected and abandoned, to spend some undefined time there, preparing for his future ministry.

Maybe because there was so much in that place that felt uncomfortable and unfamiliar he found himself being tempted, tempted by ideas that might bring him comfort, might change the situation he found himself in, might take away his concerns about his future.

Are there similarities for us with this time of the pandemic? Life was going on normally with its ups and downs and then suddenly – we became aware of a vast expanse of time stretching out from last March until when? It has few familiar landmarks, it is uncomfortable. We have no similar experience to compare it with, we don't know when it will end? When or will things return to what used to be a normal pattern of activity?

And we find ourselves tempted to seek comfort, to fill the empty feelings, to.....

How have I been tempted to comfort myself in all the sameness and uncertainty of this Lockdown time?

We know our weaknesses and we know our strengths, we can always start again.  
During this Lent Jesus invites us back to face ourselves, our reality, with him by our side.

Listen to the words of **the song** as God says to you : '**Come back to me with all your heart**'

words Gregory Norbert OSB sung by Western Priory

Come back to me with all your heart.  
Don't let fear keep us apart.  
Trees do bend though tall and straight,  
So must we to others' call.  
Long have I waited for your coming  
Home to me and living deeply our new life.  
The wilderness will lead you  
To your heart where I will speak.  
Integrity and justice with tenderness you shall know.  
You shall sleep secure in peace,  
Faithfulness will be your joy.



In the **1<sup>st</sup> reading from Genesis 9:8-15**, today, we read that God said the rainbow would be a sign of God's promise and fidelity to his people.

At the beginning of this Lent find something in your house or in nature that you will see everyday that will remind you of God's promise, fidelity and love for you as a beloved son or daughter.

### **A green heart**

Into a dark world  
a snowdrop comes,  
a benison  
of hope and peace,  
carrying within it  
a green heart,  
symbol of God's renewing love.



Come to inhabit our darkness  
Lord Christ,  
For dark and light  
are alike to you.  
May nature's white candles of hope  
remind us of your birth  
and light our journey  
through Lent and beyond.

Kate McIlhagga

