

First Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

Readings & Background on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday's Readings

First Reading : *Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7*

Eve and Adam eat from the tree that was forbidden to them by God.

Responsorial Psalm : *Psalms 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17*

A prayer for mercy

Second Reading : *Romans 5:12-19*

Through the obedience of Jesus, many will be made righteous.

Gospel Reading : *Matthew 4:1-11*

Jesus fasts for 40 days in the desert and is tempted by the devil.

Background on the Gospel Reading

In each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew, and Luke), after Jesus' baptism by John, **Jesus is reported to have gone to the desert to fast and pray for 40 days.**

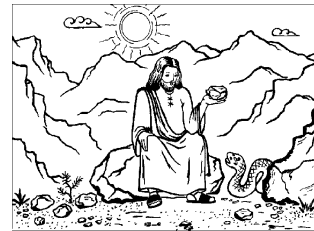
In each case, while in the desert, Jesus is tempted by the devil.

Matthew and Luke give more detail than Mark does, but each one **tells how the devil tempts Jesus in the desert.**

In Matthew, as in Luke, the devil presents **three temptations to Jesus.**

The devil:

- tempts Jesus to use his power to appease his hunger;
- tempts Jesus to put God's promise of protection to the test
- offers Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship the devil.



In each case, **Jesus resists the temptation**, rebuking the devil with words from Scripture.

The account of Jesus' temptation in the desert is filled with allusions and parallels to the Old Testament, including the story of the people of Israel. **The Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert in Exodus**, for example and Jesus spends 40 days in the desert. As the Israelites were tempted during the Exodus, so too is Jesus tempted.

Each temptation offers insight into **both God and the human condition**. Jesus' rejection of the temptations shows that he will not put God to the test. Grounding himself on the word and authority of Scripture, **Jesus rebukes the devil, confident in God's protection and faithfulness.**

As we start our journey through Lent, our Sunday readings **call us to adopt the same confidence that Jesus had in the face of temptation: God's word alone will suffice; God's promise of protection can be trusted; God alone is God.**

Pray together the **Lord's Prayer** with particular emphasis on the words **“and lead us not into temptation.”**

First Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

Making the Connection (Grades 1, 2, and 3)

Gospel Reading Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus fasts for 40 days in the desert and is tempted by the devil.

Jesus was tempted three times in the desert by the devil. Jesus refused to serve the devil and resisted temptation by quoting Scripture. We can also learn to resist temptations by drawing strength and confidence from God's word in Scripture.

Materials Needed

- None

Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Once Jesus went **into the desert to pray because he loved God very much.**

Jesus stayed there **40 days without eating anything.**

The devil thought he could tempt Jesus to do wrong because Jesus was so weak from not eating. **Three times the devil tried to get Jesus to believe in him instead of God,** but Jesus only believed what God had said in the Bible.



2. In the Bible, we can find God's promises to us and to all people who love God. **We can trust the Bible to tell us what's right and wrong.**

Listen as I read the story about Jesus in the desert as it is told in the Bible.

3. Read the Gospel, Matthew 4:1-11, to the children.
4. **What did the devil try to do to Jesus?** (He tried to tempt him to prove that he was God's Son.)
What did Jesus do? (He resisted temptation and told the devil to go away.)
Jesus succeeded in resisting the temptations of the devil because **Jesus believed all that God had taught in the Bible.** We can resist temptations too if we believe and trust in God's Word, which is found in the Bible.
5. Conclude by praying together that **we will trust God's word to us as Jesus did** and resist temptation.

Pray together the Lord's Prayer with particular emphasis on the words **“and lead us not into temptation.”**



Carlos Bautista | <http://ministry-to-children.com>

First Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

Making the Connection (Grades 4, 5, and 6)

Gospel Reading Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus fasts for 40 days in the desert and is tempted by the devil.

It is part of the human condition to **face temptations in our lives**. We show ourselves to be Christians when we **resist temptations** and **remain faithful to God's promises** to us. In the model of Jesus, we can draw confidence and direction by trusting God's word to us in Scripture.

Materials Needed)

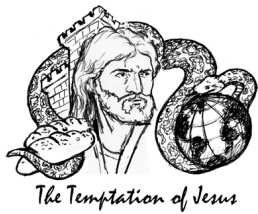
- None

Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Sometimes we are tempted to do things that we know are not right.
Let's make a list of the things that can tempt people your age. (Avoiding chores, skipping homework, talking unkindly about a friend)
2. *We all experience many kinds of temptations. When we are tempted, what helps us resist temptation? (Accept all reasonable answers.)*
3. Jesus also faced temptations. The Gospels tell about a time when **Jesus went to the desert to pray and fast, and the devil tempted him**. Let us listen carefully to that story.
4. Invite one or more volunteers to read Matthew 4:1-11.
5. What three temptations did Jesus face? **(to use his power to turn stones into bread; to test God's promise to protect him; to worship the devil in order to receive rule of the world)**
In each case, what did Jesus depend on to resist temptation? **(Scripture)**
6. Jesus trusted God's word in Scripture and was able to resist the temptations of the devil. Scripture can also help us resist temptation. **When we read the Bible, we learn about God and what God wants of us.**
7. Let's name some things in Scripture that can help us resist the temptations that we listed when we began. Help the children think of ideas or verses from Scripture that address a temptation they might face. **(We know that we are supposed to be honest from the Ten Commandments.)**
8. Pray together that we will be confident in God's word as found in Scripture and trust it when we face temptations.

Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer with particular emphasis on the words **"and lead us not into temptation."**





First Sunday of Lent, Cycle A Making the Connection (Grades 7, 8, and 9)

Gospel Reading Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus fasts for 40 days in the desert and is tempted by the devil.

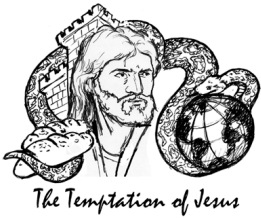
Young people at this age are bombarded with temptations. Knowing that Jesus also faced temptations will help them know that they are not alone.

Materials Needed

- None

Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Tell the young people that when people attempt to climb a mountain for the first time, they are often accompanied by a guide—a person who has climbed the mountain before and can point out the challenges that lie ahead and help the new climbers avoid danger.
2. Point out that because ***Jesus became man, he was able to experience all the challenges that humans face.***
3. Invite volunteers to read aloud Matthew 4:1-11.
4. Share with the young people the following famous saying: ***There are no new sins. The old ones just get more publicity.***
5. Explain that the temptations that Jesus faced symbolize the same types of temptations that we face today as his followers.
6. Brainstorm with the young people the kinds of temptations they face.
7. ***Jesus trusted God's word in Scripture and was able to resist the temptations of the devil. Scripture can also help us resist temptation. When we read the Bible, we learn about God and what God wants of us.***
8. Pray together that we will be confident in God's Word as found in Scripture and that we will trust his Word when we face temptations.
9. Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer, with particular emphasis on the words "and lead us not into temptation."



First Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

Family Connection

Gospel Reading Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus fasts for 40 days in the desert and is tempted by the devil.

Family Connection

When Jesus resists the temptations presented to him by the devil, he draws on his religious upbringing and tradition. Jesus is able to quote from Scripture because he is the Son of God and because he was a human person who lived his Jewish beliefs fully.

We who are responsible for raising children are also called upon to immerse them fully in our Catholic Christian tradition so that they too will be able to draw upon this tradition to resist the temptations they will face in their lives.

Use this Sunday as an opportunity to call your family's attention to the importance of Scripture in our lives.

Gather your family around the family Bible and read today's **Gospel, Matthew 4:1-11**.

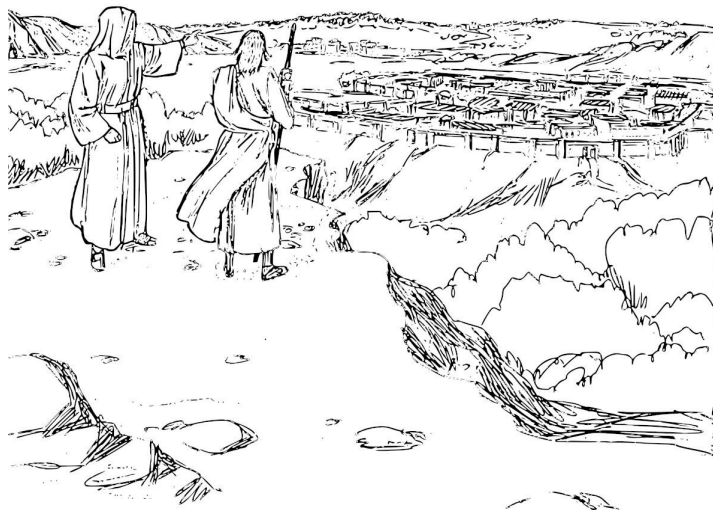
Recall that Jesus rebuked **the devil's temptations** by quoting Scripture.

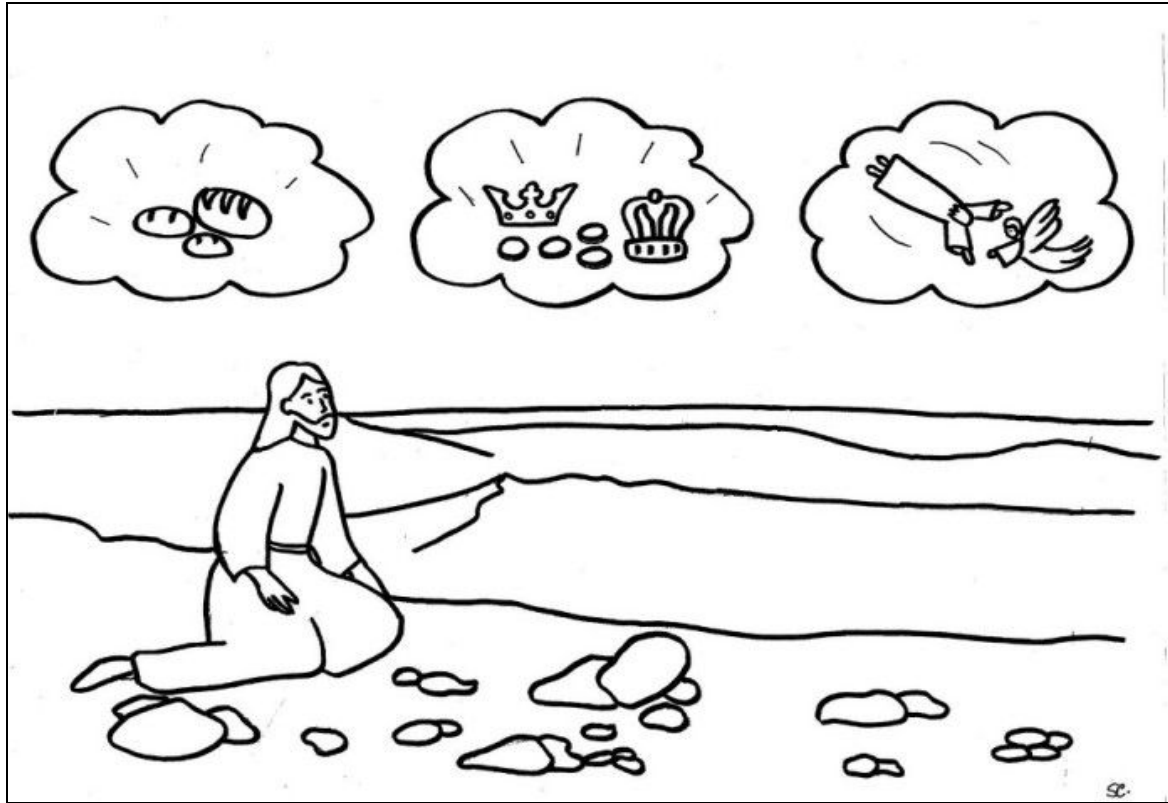
Take some time as a family to talk about the words that are found in the Bible and the importance of Scripture to our faith.

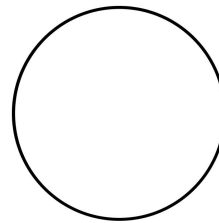
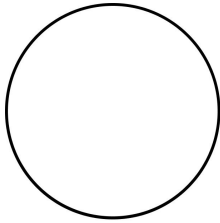
Perhaps the older members of the family can share a favourite Scripture passage with everyone. Younger family members can tell their favourite story from the Bible and be shown where that story can be found.

In each case, encourage a deeper sharing of faith by asking each person to tell why the Scripture passage shared is important to him or her.

Conclude your time together by again reading Jesus' reply to the devil found in Matthew 4:4 ("**One does not live by bread alone . . .**") and **praying the Lord's Prayer**.

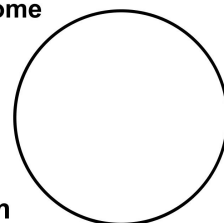
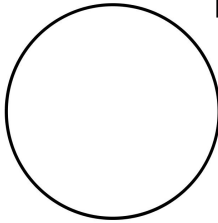




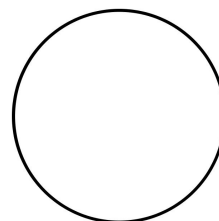
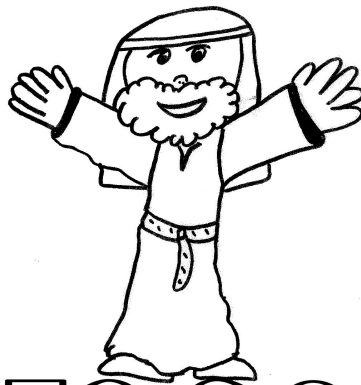
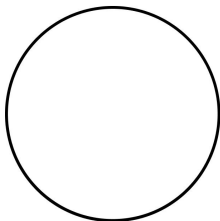


OVERCOME TEMPTATION

Draw or write 4 ways one can overcome
temptation. Color the page.

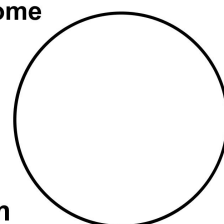
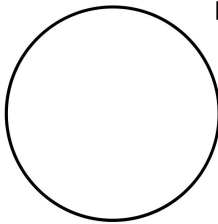


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OVERCOME TEMPTATION

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