

## Reading for the First Sunday of Lent

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026

### First reading

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

#### **The creation and sin of our first parents.**

The Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 51(50):3-4. 5-6b. 12-13. 14, 17. R cf. 3a**

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

Have mercy on me, O God,

according to your merciful love;

according to your great compassion,

blot out my transgressions.

Wash me completely from my iniquity,

and cleanse me from my sin.

My transgressions, truly I know them;

my sin is always before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned;

what is evil in your sight I have done.

Create a pure heart for me, O God;

renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence;

take not your holy spirit from me.

Restore in me the joy of your salvation;

sustain in me a willing spirit.

O Lord, open my lips

and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

## **Second reading**

**Romans 5:12-19**

**‘Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.’**

Brothers and Sisters: Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned — for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man; much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Matthew 4:4b**

Glory and praise to you, O Christ.  
One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

## **Gospel**

**Matthew 4:1-11**

**Jesus fasts for forty days and is tempted.**

At that time: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

And the tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’ But he answered, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” ’

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the Temple and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you”, and “On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.” ’ Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.” ’

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.” ’ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

## **Short reflection on the reading for today**

The story of Jesus’ temptations is not to be taken lightly. It’s a warning that we can ruin our lives if we stray from the path God wills for us. The first temptation was decisively important. On the surface it is a desire for something innocent and good: why not call on God power to satisfy our hunger. “If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread,” the tempter says to Jesus. His reply is surprising: “One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.” We must always seek God’s will above all. At every moment we must listen to God’s Word, seek God’s will.

Our deepest needs are not met by physical food and drink. Human beings need and yearn for more, for spiritual nurture. To help save other people from hunger and misery, we need to listen to God our Father, who awakens in our conscience a hunger for justice and solidarity.

Perhaps our great temptation today is to “change things into bread”, to reduce our desires to what is tangible and consumable. Indiscriminate consumerism is all around us, but it is hardly the way to progress and liberation. A consumerist society leads to emptiness and discontent. Why do the number of suicides keep growing? Why do we barricade ourselves in gated communities, and build walls and barriers to stop hungry people from sharing our prosperity and disturbing our peace? Jesus wants us to be aware that human beings do not live on bread alone. We also need to nurture the spirit, know love and friendship, develop solidarity with those who suffer, listen to our conscience, open to the ultimate Mystery of sharing, that joins us with God.