

Church of the Divine Love

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 6, 2022

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence Alleluias are omitted during Lent

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn **#143 – The glory of these forty days**

Opening Acclamation for Lent page 351

The Decalogue page 350

The Confession page 353

THE WORD OF GOD

Kyrie page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Deuteronomy 26:1=11**

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Second Lesson: **Romans 10:8b-13**

Gradual Hymn **#147 – Now let us all with one accord**

Gospel: **Luke 4:1-13**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B	page 367
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 362
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn – #435 – At the Name of Jesus vs. 1-3, 6	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #149 – Eternal Lord of love	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday March 6, 2022

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11; Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16; Romans 10: 8b-13; Luke 4: 1-13

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

The older I get and the more of life I experience, the more tentative life becomes. There are no guarantees. The certainty of naiveté and youth have given way to the unknown and unpredictable. That is both exciting and frightening, promising and risky. I don't know what tomorrow will bring. I can plan and prepare, and chances are many of those things will happen, become a reality, but then there are those surprises that were never expected, uncertainties and interruptions that could not be foreseen or planned for. Some are welcome, others are not.

Think about how your life has been interrupted in unforeseen and unpredictable ways, for better and for worse. When has the future taken you completely by surprise? That's when life becomes really real. That's what it means to enter the wilderness. The wilderness is not so much a place or a landscape. It's our life. And life is wild. It's untamed and uncontrollable.

The future is always coming to us in ways we cannot foresee or plan for. And it always comes with promise and risk. I am not talking about promise as a simple and predictable process by which an intention becomes a reality, but something that is completely open ended, something that holds endless possibilities. It's the kind of thing that depends on hope and faith more than it does the passage of time or the completion of an action. The promise promises that something is coming. What that is, we don't know. That's what makes life so wild. Every promise of life, every promise we make, every promise made to us, is accompanied by the risk that it might not be fulfilled or that it won't be fulfilled in the

way we want or expect. But if the promise had no risk, it would have no value. Promise and risk are two sides of life. And isn't that the wilderness story of today's gospel (Luke 4:1-13)?

The way Luke tells it one minute Jesus is the Beloved Son, the one with whom God is well pleased. He leaves his baptismal waters full of the Holy Spirit. The next minute he is in the wilderness empty and famished. He's been tempted by the devil for forty days. "Turn these stones into bread." "Worship me and all this will be yours." "Jump and let God catch you if you really are God's son."

The promise in Jesus' baptism and the risk in the wilderness are not two separate stories. We might read them that way but that's not how we live them. Every promise carries risk, and every risk carries promise. The promise and risk of life come to us asking for a response. Jesus had decisions to make. And so do we. We make decisions everyday of our life; decisions and choices about what to do, who we want to be, how we want to live. We sometimes call them temptations. We feel torn and pulled between the promise and the risk. Temptations hold before us the illusion of promise without risk. But that's not the way the wilderness works, and Jesus knows that.

The wilderness is full of promise and the wilderness is full of risk, for Jesus and for us. You don't get one without the other. And it's always about more than whether we say yes or no. Think about the decisions before you today, the ones that carry consequences, the ones over which you fret and with which you struggle. What are they? What is it you are really seeking? My guess is that regardless of what the decision is about what we really want, what we are really after, is life; the chance for more life, the possibility of a new life, the opportunity to be reborn when all has been lost, for ourselves or for another.

With each decision we're betting that the future will be better, not because it necessarily is, but because it might be. And that might, the possibility of a better future, of more life, is what gives us the strength, the faith, the hope, to risk a decision and remain open to the future, even when we don't know how it will turn out. And more often than not we don't. We don't know how it will turn out. Have you ever looked back on your life and wished you had done things differently, made a different decision, taken a different path, chosen something else? Yeah, we all have. We've all been left wondering what life would be like now if we had gone a different direction. Where would we be now? How would our life be different? What did we miss out on?

By the same token I suspect each of us can look back at choices and decisions we made and, if we had the chance, we'd do it all again, in the same way. They were absolutely the right thing for us. We wouldn't trade what that has given for anything, and we wouldn't want to imagine our life otherwise. It would be easy to look at those two situations and label one as failure and the other as a success, one in which we made the wrong decision and one in which we made the right decision. I think that's often how we live and view life. And I think that's how we often tend to hear today's gospel (Luke 4:1-13). Jesus made the right decisions, and we should too. We turn the gospel into an imperative rather than an opening to life.

I am all for making good and thoughtful decisions, but what if it's more than that? What if the desire for more life is what underlies both those situations I described? What if this isn't so much about whether we get it right or wrong but whether we remain open to the coming future? That's what's happening with Jesus in the wilderness. It's not a question of whether he will prove himself, whether he will make the right decision, but whether he will stay open to his future. And that's true for us as well.

I think that's what Lent about. Lent is about learning to stay open to life, to the coming future. The things we do or give up for Lent are not to gain God's approval or to improve ourselves but to help keep us open to the future, to the life that is coming. That's the wilderness struggle, the struggle of life, the struggle to remain open. It's so easy and tempting to close ourselves to the future. We do that in so many ways; fear, anger, hurt, guilt, disappointment, selfishness. What parts of your life have you closed to the future? What would it take to reopen them? That's the Lenten work before us, to continually remain open to life, to our future.

I don't know what the future will bring you or me. And neither do you. But I know this, where there is a future there is also the possibility of life and more life. I don't want to close that possibility. So, what if this Lent, we follow our temptations? I don't mean we just say yes and give in to them. And I don't mean we just say no and turn away from them. What if we follow the learning, they offer us? Where would they take us? What would they give us? They would give us back ourselves. They would return us to the truth of who we are, daughters and sons of God, beloved children, with whom he is well pleased. That's the gift of temptation and the good the devil unwittingly does. **Amen.**

Masks optional with social distance seating

SUNDAY – 1 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
MONDAY	8:00 AM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:00 PM	AA MEETING	
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
SUNDAY – 2 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Girard Bishop	Harriet Capers	Bob Curley
Celeste	Arlene Goodenough	Dorothy
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Grace Schinella
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Robert Sweat
Martinisi Family	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Sylvia
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Laura
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Taylor
Ciara	Gabriel	Aidan
Elodie	Del	Julia
People of Haiti	Chrissy Neville	Tim
Theresa K.	Amy E.	
Nathan Treadwell	Christopher & Family	
People of Ukraine		

Help us to speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and for ever. Amen

