



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION**  
**SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2026 – First Sunday of Lent**

**COLLECT**

Almighty God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,  
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:  
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;  
and, as you know our weakness,  
so may we know your power to save;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Psalm 32**

- 1 Happy the one whose transgression is forgiven, ♦  
and whose sin is covered.
- 2 Happy the one to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, ♦  
and in whose spirit there is no guile.
- 3 For I held my tongue; ♦  
my bones wasted away through my groaning all the day long.
- 4 Your hand was heavy upon me day and night; ♦  
my moisture was dried up like the drought in summer.
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you ♦  
and my iniquity I did not hide.
- 6 I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' ♦  
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
- 7 Therefore let all the faithful make their prayers to you in time of trouble; ♦  
in the great water flood, it shall not reach them.
- 8 You are a place for me to hide in; you preserve me from trouble; ♦  
you surround me with songs of deliverance.
- 9 'I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; ♦  
I will guide you with my eye.
- 10 'Be not like horse and mule which have no understanding; ♦  
whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.'
- 11 Great tribulations remain for the wicked, ♦  
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.
- 12 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; ♦  
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

**A reading from the letter to the Romans, chapter 5, verses 12-19.**

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:**

The second reading is Matthew, chapter 4, verses 1-11.

**and then at the end:**

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel preceded by the Acclamation**

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

I am the light of the world, says the Lord,  
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, chapter 4,, verses 1-11

**Glory to you, O Lord**

*And, at the end:*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. 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,

"One does 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 placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying 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,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."

Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do 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 splendour; and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,  
and serve only him."

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

## ***A Reflection from Peter***

Lent is not a grim, difficult struggle. The old English word Lent simply means spring, and these weeks are, above all, a time for growth and renewal. It's true, it does feel very different – in little ways. It's a time when we don't have flowers in church; and it's a time when we give up saying or singing "Alleluia!" – one of those great words of rejoicing that specially colours the world of Christians and Jews. Indeed, there was a medieval practice of burying the alleluia (rather like squirrels burying nuts), and then digging it up again for Easter (and, just the other day, I read of a parish in Australia that has revived the practice!). Every year in the monastery we reminded one another "Don't say 'alleluia'" – but, every year, there was at least one brother who would find himself beginning to say, or sing, "Al..." and having to choke the rest of the word back! A little thing, but as so often, it's the little things that help us stop and think.

Today takes us with Jesus into the wilderness where he faces temptation. In this context the wilderness is not to be seen as hugely exceptional, but rather one of those small changes in rhythm and routine that cause us to focus, to attend more particularly to what is happening. So often the journey of our lives can seem 'just to have happened'. Great swathes of life have just come and gone: this makes the moments when we have been able to focus and feel that we are consciously engaged in real choices all the more special and memorable. For Jesus the experience is very focused and clear. He is offered possibilities of power and success, and the opportunity to become entirely autonomous – free from dependence on anyone or anything else. Faced with such chances, I'm not sure that I'd need to be feeling hungry to be tempted. Being able to call up a fantastic meal without having to do anything more than think it (and not having to see money slide out of my bank account to pay a delivery service!) is a real temptation; as is the idea of being the ruler of the world... But Jesus sees with complete clarity that this is not who he is. He could say yes to the temptations, but cease to be himself. He would 'lose his own soul' in the process. So, once again Lent is a gift that comes every year: a time to sit with God and learn a little more about the person God is calling us to be, and to resolve to make those choices and decisions affirm our truest, best selves.