

Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

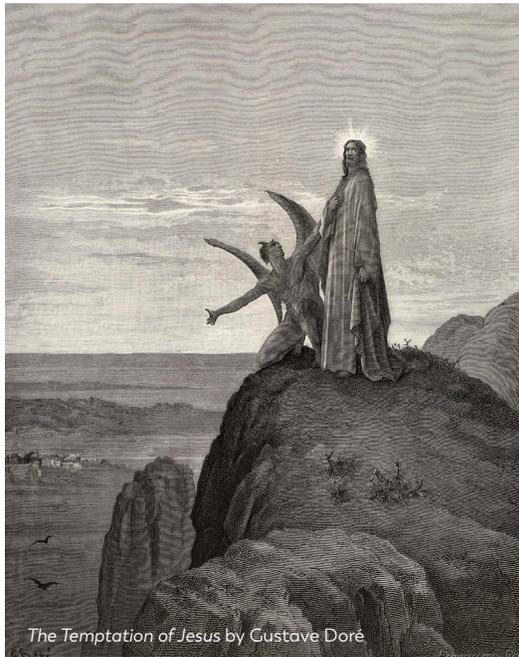
First Sunday of Lent (A)

Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7 • Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17
Romans 5:12-19 • Matthew 4:1-11



Faithful Son, Faithful Children

The First Sunday of Lent begins with Jesus in the wilderness, where he fasts for forty days and resists the temptations of the devil. The Gospel tells us, “At that time Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1). Just as Israel passed through the Red Sea and spent forty years in the desert, so too does Jesus pass through the waters of baptism and then endure forty days in the wilderness. Yet where Israel failed, Jesus, the true and faithful Son, remains steadfast.



At the heart of the enemy’s attack lies a subtle but devastating question: “If you are the Son of God ...” Each temptation aims to undermine the filial relationship between Jesus and his Father. The devil tempts him to satisfy his hunger apart from the Father’s will, to test God’s protection, and to grasp at power and glory without obedience. Yet Jesus clings to the word of God, refuses to be separated from his Father, and emerges victorious.

This pattern stretches back to the beginning. In the Garden of Eden, the serpent questioned God’s word, sowing doubt between Adam, Eve, and their Father. John names the same three snares: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). But where Adam and Eve failed, Christ triumphs. In him, we see not only the faithful Son but also the model for all who have been adopted as sons and daughters of God. Lent, then, becomes a season of reclaiming our true identity as beloved children of the Father, resisting every lie that would separate us from him.

Living the Gospel

Lent calls us to enter the wilderness with Christ, not to be overcome by temptation, but to be strengthened in our relationship with the Father. This week, practice responding to temptation by turning directly to God in prayer: “Abba, Father, I trust in you.” Root yourself in the Word of God, participate fully in the sacramental life, and embrace fasting as a way of training your heart to desire the Father above all else. By uniting yourself to the faithful Son, you, too, can remain steadfast as a true child of God.

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFXggBozVoo>

Ponder and Pray

» In your own life, where does the enemy tempt you to doubt your identity as a beloved son or daughter of God? How do you hear the echo of the serpent’s question, “Did God really say ...?” in your moments of weakness?

» Jesus resisted temptation by clinging to the Word of God and trusting his Father completely. How can you deepen your reliance on Scripture, the sacraments, and prayer this Lent so that your relationship with the Father is strengthened against attack?

» Adam and Eve grasped at what was “pleasing to the eyes” and “desirable to make one wise,” but Christ chose obedience to the Father. What attachments, desires, or ambitions might you need to surrender this season in order to live more fully as a faithful child of God?

“ **Just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.** ”
—Romans 5:19

Make It Your Own

You and others in your household may use this space to write about anything related to today’s Mass. It might be your view of Jeff Cavins’s reflection, your priest’s homily, your answers to the questions on this page—whatever will help you and your household get the most out of today’s celebration.