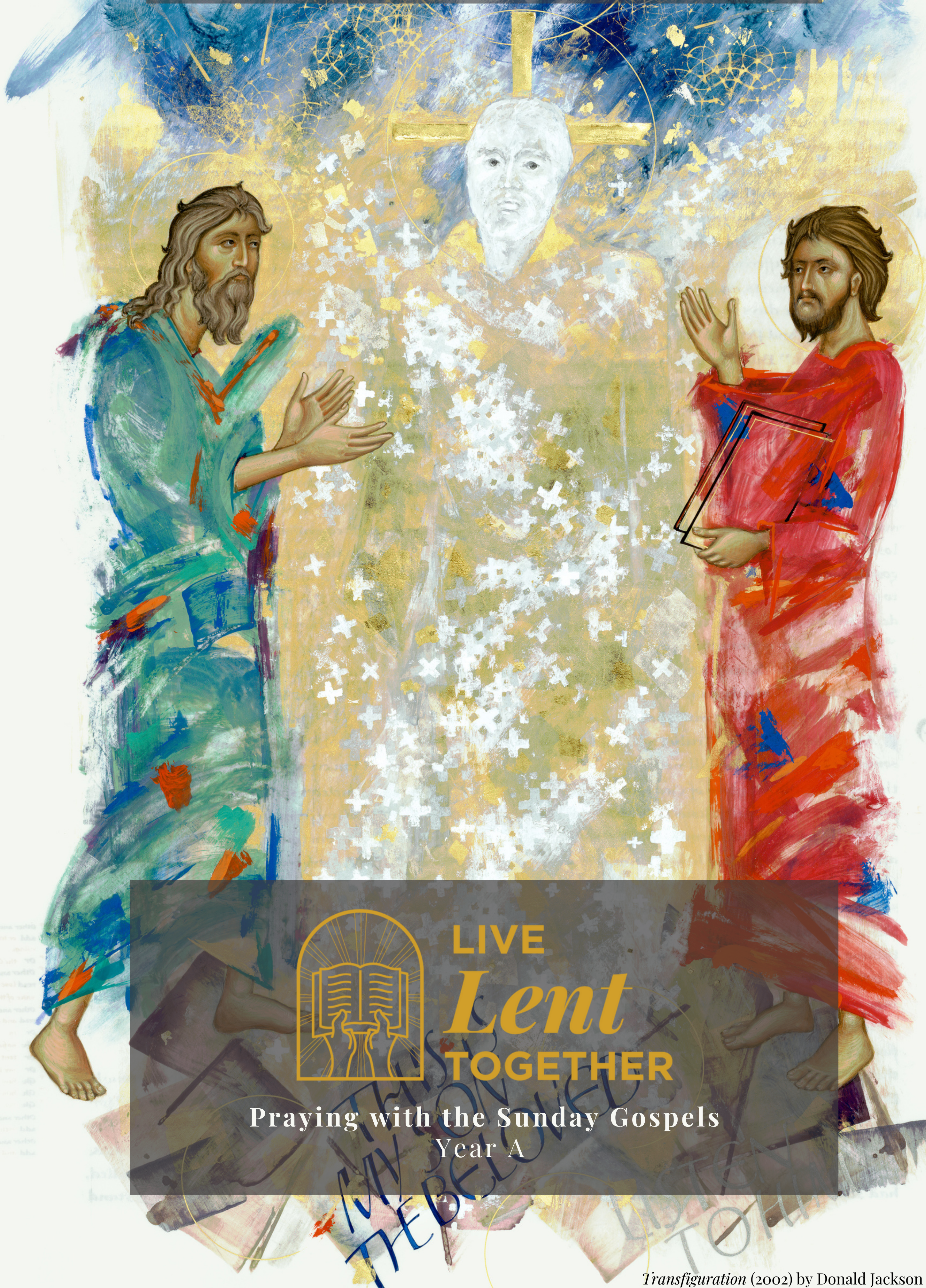


From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard:
This is my beloved Son, hear him.
Cf. Matthew 17:5



LIVE
Lent
TOGETHER

Praying with the Sunday Gospels
Year A

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Live Lent Together

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

John 8:12



Christ the Light (2020) by Kelly Latimore

Welcome

Thank you for saying *yes* to the invitation to live Lent with us! As we walk and share life together in the coming six weeks, we hope you experience the following graces:

- **Deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ.**

The Sunday Gospels during the Lenten season are a journey through Jesus Christ's life-giving ministry, passion, and death. As you come to know Christ over the next six weeks, you will discover how Christ is present and at work in your own life.

- **Encounter God through Scripture.**

This series does not primarily provide an *education* in faith, but *life transformation* through an encounter with the living God. We hope this encounter draws you into a deeper experience of God's love.

- **Form authentic friendships and experience community.**

You will share deeply in fellowship and faith with the other members of your small group over the next six weeks. Cultivate an openness to how God desires to be present to you through your small group.

- **Be inspired to share the Good News of God's love with others.**

As Pope Francis said in *The Joy of the Gospel*, "anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love."

The WRAP Method

The Word of God is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, continues to speak to us through the scriptures written nearly 2,000 years ago. Throughout these next six weeks cultivate an open heart to God's voice speaking to you through each weekly Gospel reading and through the other members of your small group.

The WRAP Method, based on the ancient monastic practice of *Lectio Divina* (Sacred Reading), will help facilitate the process of listening and reflecting on the weekly readings.

1. Pray to the Holy Spirit for open hearts and the gift of prayer. Become aware that God is right here, right now, and wants to speak to you directly.

2. **WRITE**

Be attentive to a word, phrase, or image that captivates your attention or curiosity in the Gospel passage. Take a few moments to write down that word, phrase, or image that speaks to you.

3. **REFLECT**

What is God trying to communicate through the word, phrase, or image that captivated your attention? Reflect on the principle or truth that the Scripture is teaching. Use your imaginative and analytical faculties. Write down your thoughts, feelings, and desires in relationship to the Scripture; and dialogue with Jesus.

4. **APPLY**

How is God's Word inviting you to change your perspective or life? Consider how Jesus is calling you to apply the truths from Scripture. Write down your response to the Scripture and how you can apply it beginning today.

5. **PRAY**

Write a simple prayer related to the verses that offer praise and thanksgiving to God. Ask God to help you respond in faith to God's Word.

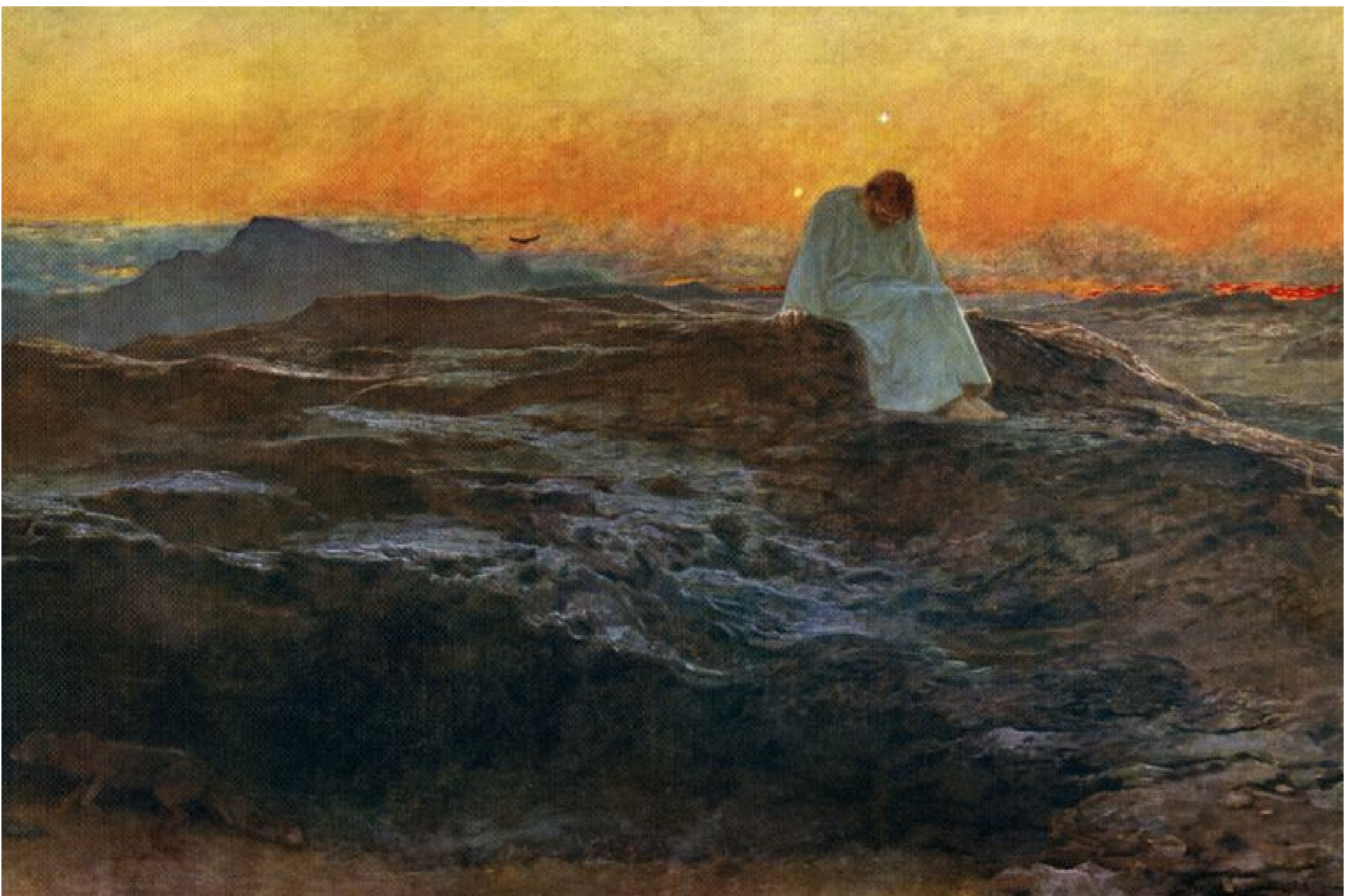
Preparing for the First Sunday of Lent

Collect, First Sunday of Lent

Grant, almighty God,
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,
that we may grow in understanding
of the riches hidden in Christ
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- For what in your life are you most grateful?
- How have you experienced the Lenten season in previous years?



Christ in the Wilderness (1898) by Briton Riviera

Preparing for the First Sunday of Lent

WRAP with the Gospel – Matthew 4:1-11

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread.” He said in reply, “It is written: *One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.*” Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet 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 with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*” Jesus answered him, “Again it is written, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*” Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, “All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me.” At this, Jesus said to him, “Get away, Satan! It is written: *The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.*” Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for the First Sunday of Lent

Going Deeper Questions

- What role do trials and challenges play in our lives?
- In the desert, Jesus does not engage with the devil's temptations. He simply quotes the Word of God in scripture. How has God's Word inspired you in times of temptation?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 17

℟ Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. **℟**

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me. **℟**

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. **℟**

Preparing for the Second Sunday of Lent

Collect, Second Sunday of Lent

O God, who have commanded us
to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray,
to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
- What is your most treasured memory?



Transfiguration of Jesus, Fr. John Giuliani

Preparing for the Second Sunday of Lent

WRAP with the Gospel – Matthew 17:1-9

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and do not be afraid.” And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, “Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for the Second Sunday of Lent

Going Deeper Questions

- Jesus consoles his disciples, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." How might Jesus be inviting you to rise out of fear this Lent?
- The transfiguration is a moment of *theophany*, a visible manifestation of God. In what ways have you experienced God's presence in a real and tangible way?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

Psalm 33:4-5, 20

℟ Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Upright is the word of the LORD, and all his works are trustworthy.
He loves justice and right; of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full. **℟**

Our soul waits for the LORD, who is our help and our shield.
May your kindness, O LORD, be upon us who have put our hope in you. **℟**

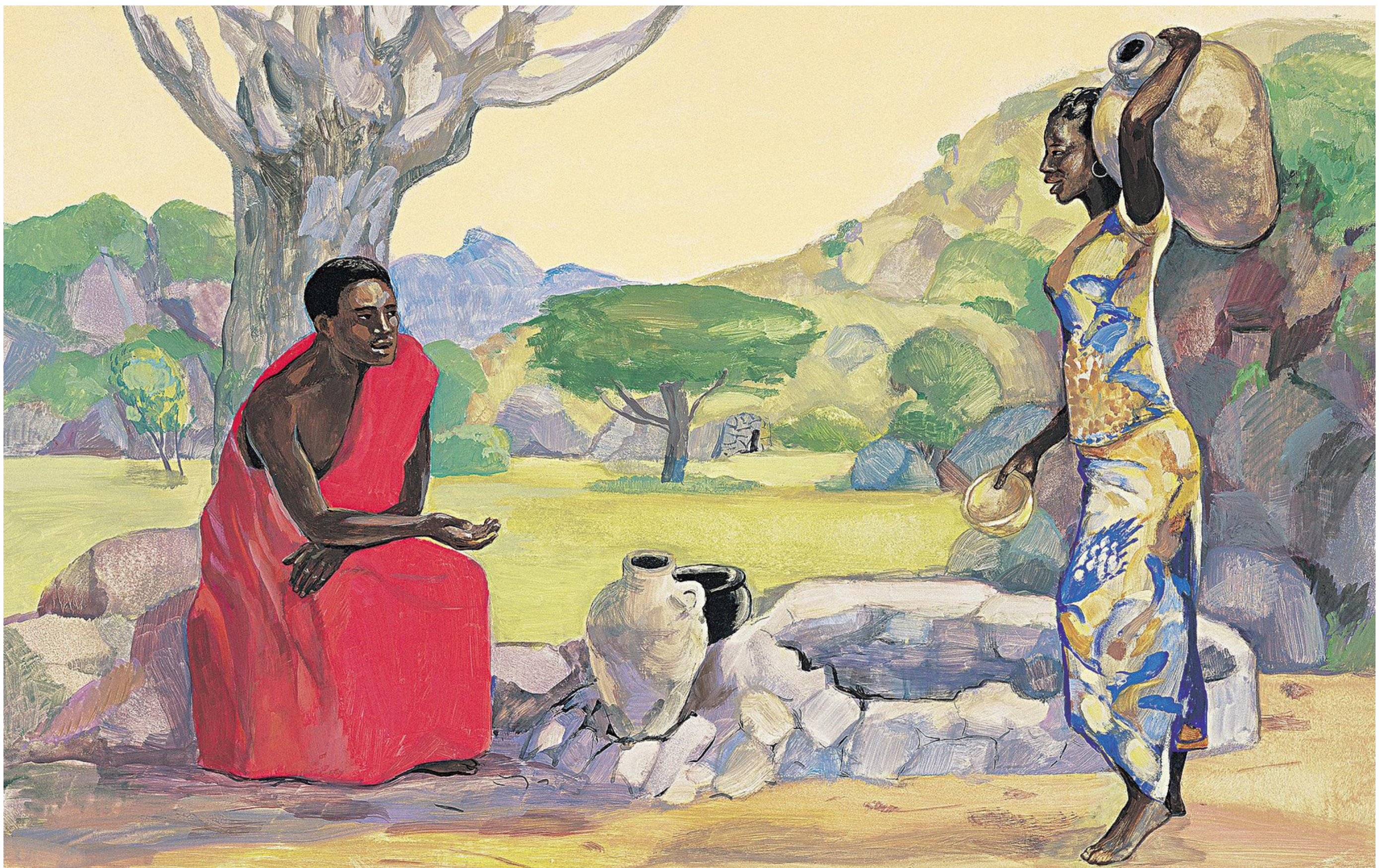
Preparing for the Third Sunday of Lent

Collect, Third Sunday of Lent

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,
 who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving
 have shown us the remedy for sin,
 look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,
 that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,
 may always be lifted up by your mercy.
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time?
- Would you rather vacation by the ocean, in the mountains, or in a city?



Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (1973) by Jesus Mama

Preparing for the Third Sunday of Lent

WRAP with the Gospel - John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, “How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?” —For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.— Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?” Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water. I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking with you.” Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him. When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.”

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for the Third Sunday of Lent

Going Deeper Questions

- Has a seemingly chance meeting ever played a part in your coming to know God more deeply? What did you experience?
- What do you thirst for in life? How does Jesus fulfill your thirst?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7

℟ If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD; let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him. **℟**

Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the LORD who made us.
For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides. **℟**

Preparing for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

Collect, Fourth Sunday of Lent

O God, who through your Word
reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way,
grant, we pray,
that with prompt devotion and eager faith
the Christian people may hasten
toward the solemn celebrations to come.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- What is one thing you are most grateful for this past week?
- If you could wake up tomorrow having gained one quality or ability, what would it be?



Healing of the Man Born Blind (1567) by El Greco

Preparing for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

WRAP with the Gospel - John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool of Siloam” — which means Sent —. So he went and washed, and came back able to see. His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is,” but others said, “No, he just looks like him.” He said, “I am.” They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out. When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

Going Deeper Questions

- The blind man not only receives his sight, but the courage to acknowledge what Jesus has done for him. How has God brought healing into your life?
- How has Jesus changed the way you look at yourself, the world, and God?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4,6

℟ The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul. **℟**

He guides me in right paths for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side
With your rod and your staff that give me courage. **℟**

Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come. **℟**

Preparing for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

Collect, Fifth Sunday of Lent

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God,
may we walk eagerly in that same charity
with which, out of love for the world,
your Son handed himself over to death.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- What does friendship mean to you?
- How would you describe your relationship with your family?



The Raising of Lazarus (1967) by Watanabe Sadao

Preparing for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

WRAP with the Gospel - John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

The sisters of Lazarus sent word to Jesus, saying, “Master, the one you love is ill.” When Jesus heard this he said, “This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise.” Martha said, “I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.” He became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Sir, come and see.” And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him.” But some of them said, “Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?” So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the dead man’s sister, said to him, “Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me.” And when he had said this, He cried out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, “Untie him and let him go.” Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

Going Deeper Questions

- What makes it challenging for you to believe in God's will and promise for your life?
- Jesus commands Lazarus to come out of the tomb. How has Christ led you out of a tomb of despair or hopelessness into new life?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4

℟ With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication. **℟**

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, LORD, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered. **℟**

Preparing for Palm Sunday

Collect, Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Almighty ever-living God,
 who as an example of humility for the human race to follow
 caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross,
 graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering
 and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
 Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Conversation Starter

- Share one thing you appreciate about your experience with your small group over the last several weeks.



Entry of Christ into Jerusalem (c. 1320) by Pietro Lorenzetti

Preparing for Palm Sunday

WRAP with the Gospel – Matthew 21:1-11

When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, ‘The master has need of them.’ Then he will send them at once.” This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: *Say to daughter Zion, “Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”* The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.” And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, “Who is this?” And the crowds replied, “This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Write

Reflect

Apply

Pray

Preparing for Palm Sunday

Going Deeper Questions

- What kind of reception would Jesus receive if he rode into your town today?
- How will you journey with Jesus throughout this Holy Week?

Group Action

How is your group being called to live out the Gospel in the coming week?

1 Sam 2:6-8

℟ My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior!

The Lord puts to death and gives life; he casts down to the nether world; he raises up again.
The Lord makes poor and makes rich, he humbles, and also exalts. **℟**

He raises the needy from the dust; from the dung heap he lifts up the poor,
To seat them with nobles and make a glorious throne their heritage. **℟**