

## Abridged Lenten Sunday Gospel readings (Year A)

### First Sunday of Lent: Saint Matthew 4:1-11

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and nights, after which he was very hungry. The devil came and said to Jesus, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into bread.' Jesus replied, 'It is written in scripture,

“A person does not live only by eating bread. A person lives by following what the Lord says.”

Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city of Jerusalem and placed him on top of the Temple. The devil said, 'If you are the Son of God, jump off; for it is written in scripture: “God has put his angels in charge of you. They will catch you.”’

Jesus answered, 'Scripture also says: “Do not test the Lord your God.”’

Next, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him the kingdoms of the world and the wonderful things they offered. The devil then said to Jesus, 'I will give you all these, if you bow down and worship me.' Jesus replied, 'Go away Satan! For it is written in scripture: “The Lord your God is the only one you must worship and serve.”’ Then the devil left and suddenly angels appeared and looked after Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *Because Jesus' love for God meant so much more than anything else, he was able to turn down the Devil's temptations. Though we will not be tempted as Jesus was this Lent, there may be times when we have to decide between doing what is selfless and what is not. Jesus encourages us to make loving choices that bring us closer to each other and closer to God. How can we do that this week?*

### Second Sunday of Lent: Saint Matthew 17:1-9

Jesus led Peter and James and his brother John up a high mountain where they could be alone. There, Jesus's appearance changed and he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared; they were talking to Jesus. While they were speaking a bright cloud covered them and a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son. I love Him. I am pleased with Him. Listen to Him.'

When they heard this, the disciples fell down, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up to them, touched them and said, 'Stand up. Do not be afraid.'

When they looked up they saw no one but only Jesus. After this, Jesus led Peter, James and John back down the mountain, with the clear instruction to 'Tell no one what you have seen and heard until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *These amazing events on the mountain top were God's way of telling Peter, James, and John how special Jesus is. But the main lesson God wanted the disciples to learn, wasn't just that His son was special, but that we must listen to what Jesus says and act on his words. God encourages us to listen to his Son, Jesus. How can we listen to Jesus this week?*

### Third Sunday of Lent: Saint John 4:5-42

Jesus and his disciples were making a long journey in the hot sun when they passed through a Samaritan town. Jesus sat down by a well to rest while his disciples went into town to buy food. It was about twelve o'clock in the afternoon. A Samaritan woman came to the well to collect water. Jesus said to her, 'Please give me something to drink.' She replied, 'I'm surprised you are asking me for a drink. You are a Jew. I am a Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans never speak to one another.'

Jesus replied: 'Whoever drinks from this well will get thirsty again. But whoever drinks the living water that I give will never be thirsty again: it will give them eternal life.' The woman said, 'I see you are a prophet, sir. I know the Messiah is coming and he will explain everything,' said the woman. 'I am He,' Jesus answered.

The Samaritan woman hurried back into the town and told the people there, 'Come and see a man I met! Maybe he is the Christ!' And many people went to see Jesus. When the Samaritans met Jesus, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and many more came to believe on the strength of the words he spoke to them; and they said to the woman, 'Now we believe no longer because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *In the reading we hear how Jesus offers friendship and hope to a downcast stranger. This made a huge difference to the woman and her community. Jesus encourages us to offer friendship and hope to others too. Let's think of ways we can do that in school this week.*

### Fourth Sunday of Lent: Saint John 9:1-41

As they went along, Jesus and his disciples saw a blind man, begging. Jesus spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. Jesus said to him, "Go and wash in the pool." The man went and washed, and came home, seeing. His neighbours, who only knew him as a beggar, weren't sure if he was the same man.

The man who had been blind said, "It is me! Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go and wash. So I did and now I can see." The crowd brought the man to the Pharisees. The Pharisees were important religious leaders. The day on which Jesus had opened the man's eyes was a holy day when no one was allowed to work. So the Pharisees questioned the man. They said, "Jesus cannot be from God, because he works on the holy days." But the man replied, "Jesus has been sent by God. If Jesus were not from God, he could not have opened my eyes."

The Pharisees were angry and they threw the man out. When Jesus heard what had happened he went and found the man and said to him, "Do you believe I am the Son of God?" The man replied, "Yes, Lord, I believe."

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *Jesus wanted to heal the blind man because whilst others looked down on the man and only recognised him as a beggar, Jesus saw the man's dignity and that he was deserving of love and kindness. Jesus encourages us to do the same. How can we notice the good in others and treat people with dignity this week?*

## **Fifth Sunday of Lent: Saint John 11: 1-45**

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in a village called Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. Martha and Mary sent Jesus a message. It said, 'Lord, your dear friend Lazarus is very sick.' When Jesus received the message he said, 'This illness will not end in death but in God's glory.' So, although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, 'Let's go back to Bethany.' But when they arrived in Bethany they found that Lazarus had died. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus replied, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Do you believe this, Martha?' Martha answered: 'Yes, Lord, I believe you are the Christ.' When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and cried. At the sight of her tears Jesus was very upset. With a deep sigh, he said, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the people said, 'See how much he loved Lazarus!' They led Jesus to the cave where they had put Lazarus' body. He said, 'Roll the stone aside.' So they rolled aside the stone at the entrance to the cave. Then Jesus shouted, 'Lazarus, come out!' And Lazarus came out, his head, hands and feet bound in grave clothes. Jesus said: 'Unbind him and let him go free!'

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *What Jesus did for Lazarus was very special; but what he offers all of us is special, too. Through faith in Jesus all those who die are given new life with God the Father in heaven. The reading encourages us to trust that Jesus' love for us is stronger than anything, even stronger than death.*

## **Palm Sunday: Saint Matthew 9:1-41**

When Jesus and his disciples were near Jerusalem, they stopped at a hill called the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two disciples ahead, saying 'Go to the village opposite and you will find a donkey tied with its foal. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks you why you are taking the donkeys, say, "The Master needs them. He will return them soon.'" This was to fulfil what the prophet Zachariah had said: 'Tell the people of Jerusalem, "Your king is coming to you. He is humble and riding on a donkey.'" The disciples did what Jesus had told them to do. When they brought the animals to Jesus, they laid their coats on the donkeys, and Jesus sat on them. Crowds of people spread their coats on the road before Jesus. Others cut branches from the trees and laid them in his path. Many people were walking ahead while others followed behind him. They were all shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna to God in heaven!' When Jesus reached Jerusalem, the city was in turmoil. People were asking, 'Who is this man?' The crowd answered, 'This man is Jesus. He is the prophet from the town of Nazareth in Galilee.'

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Reflection idea:** *When Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a humble donkey he shows us that leaders don't have to be showy and intimidating. The reading encourages us to think about the strength and courage revealed in humility, gentleness, and solidarity.*