



# ANNUNCIATION CHURCH

*"As the father sent me, so I send you."*

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THE JUDEAN  
DESERT  
WESTERN ISRAEL

## Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

MATTHEW 4:1

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MARCH 1  
2020

FIRST SUNDAY  
OF LENT

The Lenten season is a fresh invitation to explore again who God is, who we are, and what it means to be human. We begin by hearing the tragic story of the first humans in the book of Genesis. As Paul describes in Romans, our struggles started when our ancestors broke the bond of unity with God, sought self-sufficiency, and grew apart from their true purpose and identity. In Matthew's Gospel, we see how Jesus resists the lure of living outside of unity with God. Jesus rejects false promises of possessions, power, and status. Instead, he puts his life in his Father's hands. As our model for living as a fully human person, Jesus demonstrates that we are created to live in relationship with and trust in God, and in harmony with and for all of creation.

### BEING LIKE GOD

The story of Adam and Eve, in Genesis 2 and 3, considers the origins of the trials and sufferings that we experience in human life. Part of the problem, the story suggests, is the human effort to be like God. Humans are therefore forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The story is quite a contrast from Genesis 1, which proclaims that we are made in the image and likeness of God, and called to seek to become more like God. This creates a tension that points to a challenge in our life of faith: we are created both to embody God by developing our God-given human capacities, and also to live in radical trust and dependence on

God. We are called to embrace and to live into this tension.

### GOD'S BELOVED

When the people of Israel were freed from Egypt, they were declared to be God's chosen and beloved people. They wandered in the desert for forty years, often with great resistance, as God prepared them to enter the Promised Land.

Jesus' forty days in the desert echoes their story, and offer a contrast. At his baptism, just before being led into the desert by the Spirit, Jesus was declared by a voice from the heavens to be God's "beloved Son." So, twice in today's passage, he is lured with the words "If you are the Son of God . . ." The devil tempts Jesus to re-define his sonship of God on his own terms, instead of following his Father. Israel had failed to understand its identity as God's people, but Jesus demonstrates how to live as God's Beloved.

These contrasting stories of Israel and of Jesus present us with a challenge. We are regularly tempted to redefine our identity as Christians on our own terms, to make faith comfortable and non-threatening. This Lenten season can re-mind us to allow God to transform our minds and hearts on God's terms.

Today's Readings: Gen 2:7-9, 3:1-7; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17; Rom 5:12-19 [12, 17-19]; Mt 4:1-11



We encourage you to take notes as you reflect on this week readings / homily:

Multiple horizontal lines for taking notes.

### God's Word for Children

God told Adam and Eve they should not eat the fruit from a certain tree. But they disobeyed and ate from it anyway. How many apples can you count in the tree? Write the number on the tree trunk.

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**First Sunday of Lent**

While Jesus was in the desert the devil came and tempted him to do different things. Cross out all the rocks that have the letters G, K, X, and Z on them.

The remaining letters will spell out what the devil wanted Jesus to command the stones to become. You can read the story in your Bible at Matthew 4:1-11.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| X | L | G | O | K | A | V |
| Z | K | Z | E | X | S | X |
| O | G | F | B | R | Z | G |
| K | E | X | G | A | K | D |

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DESIERTO  
DE JUDEA  
ISRAEL OCCIDENTAL

Jesús fue conducido por el Espíritu al desierto,  
para ser tentado por el demonio.

MATEO 4:1

1º DE MARZO  
DE 2020

# PRIMER DOMINGO DE CUARESMA

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La historia de Adán y Eva, en el libro del Génesis 2 y 3, es considerada como el origen del juicio y sufrimiento que experimentamos en la vida humana. Parte del problema, sugiere la historia, es el esfuerzo humano por ser como Dios. Por lo tanto, a los humanos se les prohíbe comer del árbol del conocimiento del bien y del mal. La historia es absolutamente un contraste de Génesis 1, donde se proclama que somos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios, y llamados a buscar hacernos más como Dios. Esto crea una tensión que se dirige a un reto en nuestra vida de fe: somos creados tanto para encarnar a Dios desarrollando nuestras capacidades humanas dadas por Dios, y también para vivir una confianza radical y dependencia en Dios. Estamos llamados a aceptar y vivir en esta tensión.

## LOS AMADOS DE DIOS

Cuando el pueblo de Israel fue liberado de Egipto, fueron proclamados ser los elegidos por Dios y pueblo amado. Durante cuarenta años deambularon en el desierto, frecuentemente con gran resistencia, y Dios los preparó para entrar a la Tierra Prometida.

Los cuarenta días de Jesús en el desierto refleja esta historia, y ofrece un contraste. En su bautismo, justo antes de ser guiado al desierto por el Espíritu, Jesús fue declarado por una voz del cielo ser el “Hijo amado” de Dios. Así que dos veces en el pasaje de hoy, él es tentado con las palabras “Sí eres el Hijo de Dios . . .” El diablo tienta a Jesús para redefinir su filiación de Dios en sus propios términos, en lugar de seguir a su Padre. Israel falló en entender su identidad como el pueblo de Dios, pero Jesús demuestra cómo vivir como el amado de Dios.

Estas historias contrastantes de Israel y de Jesús nos presenta un reto. Regularmente estamos tentados a redefinir nuestra identidad como cristianos en nuestros propios términos, para hacer a la fe confortable y no amenazante. Este tiempo de Cuaresma podemos recordarnos permitir que Dios transforme nuestras mentes y corazones en los términos de Dios.

Lecturas de hoy: Gn 2:7–9, 3:1–7; Sal 51 (50):3–4, 5–6, 12–13, 17; Rom 5:12–19 [12, 17–19]; Mt 4:1–11

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