

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT — March 1, 2020

First Reading — Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

⁷Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. ⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

Responsorial Psalm PS 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17

R. (cf. 3a) **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.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always:

"Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight."

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

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.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

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.

R. **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Second Reading — Romans 5:12-19

¹²Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned— ¹³sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. ¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the

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abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¹⁸Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. ¹⁹For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Gospel Reading — Matthew 4:1-11

¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. ³And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give his angels charge of you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; ⁹and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" ¹¹Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him.

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading — Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

1. What do you learn about humanity, temptation, and sin from this passage in Genesis?

Second Reading — Romans 5:12-19

2. Compare and contrast the characteristics and effects of the “trespass” with the “free gift?”.
3. How would you summarize the Good News in light of this passage?

Gospel Reading — Matthew 4:1-11

4. In what ways did Jesus’ response to temptation differ from Adam and Eve’s as seen in the first reading?
5. What can we learn about dealing with temptation from this passage?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another’s openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.