

# First Week of Lent

## BEHOLD IN HUMILITY

In the wilderness, Jesus resists the temptation to rely on power, comfort, or control. Instead, He entrusts Himself fully to the Father.

Humility opens the heart to grace. As we behold Christ in the desert, we learn that freedom begins with trust, and that God's Word is our true nourishment.

This week invites us to stand before Christ as we are, acknowledging our need for God and allowing Him to sustain us.



STANDING BEFORE CHRIST IN TRUTH.

GOSPEL FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

**MATTHEW 4:1-11**

# How to pray with Lectio Divina

*Lectio Divina* means “Divine Reading.”

It is a gentle way of praying with Scripture — listening with the heart.

## 1. LECTIO — READ

~ Receive the Word

Read the passage slowly. Notice a word or phrase that stands out.

## 2. MEDITATIO — REFLECT

~ Reflect on the Word

Ponder it. What might God be saying to you today?

## 3. ORATIO — RESPOND

~ Respond to the Word

Speak to God — in gratitude, sorrow, desire, or trust.

## 4. CONTEMPLATIO — REST

~ Rest in the Word

Be still. No words. Just sit in God’s presence.

## 5. ACTIO — LIVE IT

~ Live the Word

Let the Word take flesh in your life today. What can you do differently?

# Journaling during Lent

Some people find it helpful to keep a small journal, noting a word, thought, or moment of grace from your prayer. Journaling is another way of listening, a way of allowing the Word to remain with you and settle more deeply in your heart.

And at the end of these weeks, even a few small notes can help you see where God has been quietly at work. Let it be simple. Let it help you notice.

# Daily Rhythm for Prayer

## 1. READ THE REFLECTION SLOWLY

Let one thought or phrase touch your heart.

## 2. PRAY THE SHORT PRAYER

Allow it to become your prayer for the moment.

## 3. SIT FOR A QUIET PAUSE

Let the reflection settle. Hold a moment of stillness with God.

## 4. CARRY THE ACTION LIGHTLY INTO THE DAY

Not as a duty, but as an openness: *“Lord, show me the right moment for this.”*

*Let each day be simple. Let it unfold gently. Behold the Lord with you.*

# Lenten Companion Prayers

## **BEHOLD I LISTEN**

*To be said before reading Scripture*

Lord Jesus,  
present and attentive,  
quiet my heart before Your Word.  
As I listen to the Gospel,  
teach me to recognise Your voice  
and to receive what You desire to give.  
Amen.

## **BEHOLD I BEGIN**

*Daily opening prayer*

Jesus, humble and hidden,  
I place this day before You.  
As I journey through Lent,  
teach me to slow down and make room.  
Be with me in the places  
where my heart most longs for You.  
Amen.

## **BEHOLD I RESPOND**

*Daily closing prayer*

Jesus, Bread of Life,  
help me live what I have received.  
Shape my words, my actions, and my choices,  
that I may carry Your presence  
into my family, my relationships, my work,  
and wherever love is needed.  
Amen.

# First Sunday of Lent Gospel

## MATTHEW 4:1-11

*"One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God."*

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.

*Lectio Divina guide, pg 5*

*Prayer before reading Scripture, pg 6*

# First Week of Lent



“Let us begin again, brothers, for up to now we have done little or nothing.” — St Francis of Assisi

Francis understood the need to begin again. His life was marked by conversion, not once, but continually. He never presumed he had arrived. Instead, he trusted that God’s mercy was always new. In the desert moments of Lent, Francis reminds us that every return to God is a grace.

## MONDAY — BEHOLD IN HUMILITY

Standing before God in truth opens the heart to grace.

**Prayer:** *Jesus, help me stand before You in truth.*

**Action:** Name one place where you need God’s help and offer it to Him.

## TUESDAY — BEHOLD GOD’S WORD

God’s Word sustains life more deeply than bread.

**Prayer:** *Lord, let Your Word shape my heart.*

**Action:** Spend a few moments today reading Scripture slowly.

## WEDNESDAY — BEHOLD THE FATHER’S CARE

God knows our needs and holds them with love

**Prayer:** *Father, I place my trust in You.*

**Action:** Entrust one worry to God today.

## THURSDAY — BEHOLD THE CALL TO PRAYER

Jesus draws close to the Father in quiet trust.

**Prayer:** *Jesus, draw me into quiet prayer with You.*

**Action:** Set aside a short, intentional time of silence today.

## FRIDAY — BEHOLD THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Love reveals itself through quiet sacrifice.

**Prayer:** *Jesus, teach me the way of self-giving love.*

**Action:** Make a small sacrifice today for the good of another.

## SATURDAY — BEHOLD GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

God remains present through every trial.

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me remain faithful.*

**Action:** Give thanks for one way God has sustained you.

*Daily Opening and Closing Prayers, pg 6*

# Sacrament of Reconciliation

Lent is a season of returning. Again and again, God calls us back — not with condemnation, but with mercy.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the greatest gifts of the Church. Here, we encounter Jesus personally. Not as judge, but as healer. Not to shame us, but to restore us.

No matter how long it has been, no matter what we carry, Christ is ready to receive us.

He is gentle. He is faithful. He is waiting.

To come to Reconciliation is not to dwell on sin, but to behold mercy.

## WHY GO TO RECONCILIATION?

- To experience God's forgiveness personally
- To begin again with a lighter heart
- To receive grace to grow in holiness
- To be restored to peace and communion

This is not about being perfect. It is about coming home.

## TAKE THE STEP

If it has been a long time, do not be afraid. Priests are there to welcome you with compassion.

Come as you are.  
Bring what you carry.  
Christ will meet you there.

Look out for extended Reconciliation times during Lent at your parish and nearby churches, and consider attending a Lenten Reconciliation service if one is offered.

Behold His mercy.  
And begin again.

## A SIMPLE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Take a few quiet moments before God and ask:

### Love of God

- Have I made space for prayer in my life?
- Have I trusted God in difficulty?
- Have I honoured the Lord's Day?

### Love of neighbour

- Have I been patient and kind?
- Have I spoken harshly, judged others or held onto resentment?
- Have I failed to love when I had the opportunity?

### Faithfulness of life

- Have I cared for the life God has given to me?
- Have I chosen what leads me closer to Christ?
- Have I turned away from what I know is good?

Let the Holy Spirit guide you gently.  
You do not need to search anxiously.  
Simply be honest.

## ACT OF CONTRITION

Lord Jesus,  
I am sorry for my sins.  
With all my heart, I turn back to You.  
Thank You for Your mercy and love.  
Help me to walk in Your ways,  
to sin no more,  
and to trust in Your grace.  
Amen.



*“Let us begin again, brothers, for up to now we have done little or nothing.”* — St Francis of Assisi

St Francis knew the joy of beginning again. He never saw conversion as a single moment, but a lifelong return to God's mercy. Francis reminds us that holiness is not about never falling, but about always returning to Christ.