

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

The First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 2:7–9; 3:1–7 † Romans 5:12–19 † Matthew 4:1–11



Reflection by: Sister Ann Marie Rimmer, OP

An Invitation

As we begin the journey of Lent this season, we might experience it as an invitation to a deep encounter with God. The first reading describes the creation of the man, the garden filled with fruit bearing trees and the tree of life from which the man and woman were forbidden to eat. They disobey God and symbolically portray man's propensity to sin.

In the Gospel, Jesus has been fasting and praying for forty days. He is sorely tempted by the devil for power, prestige and glory. Jesus shows us how to resist sin. Paul tells us that just as through one man, transgression came upon all, it is through a righteous act of Jesus that all are acquitted. It is through his relationship with his father that that grace is poured out on us and we receive the grace to resist sin.

The traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are good practices to engage in. Here's the catch though. We can believe that we can perform these good practices on our own. But no, it is not about us. It is about clearing the way for a deep encounter with the Holy One. Just as Jesus' strength came from his relationship with the Father, so our strength will come from our relationship with Christ. God's deepest desire is to love us and to forgive us. Let us use these forty days to soften our hearts through prayer, reflection and good works to encounter God and our neighbor.