

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**  
**February 21, 2021**  
**The First Sunday of Lent**  
**Genesis 9:8-15 † 1 Peter 3:18-22 † Mark 1:12-15**



**Reflection by: Sr. Patricia Wormann, OP**

This Sunday in churches throughout the world, the Church will celebrate the First Sunday of Lent and will begin the final preparation of those to be fully initiated at Easter with the Rite of Election. Since the early Church, Lent was the time of retreat for those wishing to become part of the community and for the community to reflect on their baptismal call to follow Jesus in the mystery of his life, death, and resurrection.

In today's gospel, we see Jesus for 40 days, going into the desert where there were both "demons and angels." As we reflect, perhaps we too are called during this Lenten time to face our own demons. What is it that keeps us from being the person God calls us to be? What blinds us from seeing as God sees? What keeps us from loving as God loves? What are our own fears, doubts and insecurities? But wait. There are also angels as we spend time in the desert. Who in our lives accompanies us on the journey? Are there friends, colleagues, spiritual directors, therapists, or others who help us, challenge us, and affirm us on the way?

During this pandemic perhaps we have had more time to spend with our family and communities. We have witnessed to the sorrow, courage, and generosity of so many. The opportunities to listen and see the wider picture of what life is about abound because we cannot be about the "busy-ness" of our pre-pandemic lives. As we enter this sacred time, may we take the risk of entering more deeply into the mystery of Christ. May this desert time lead us to the joy and peace of the Risen Jesus.