



## **21 FEBRUARY 2021**

### **FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

As we begin the season of Lent, we are reminded of our Baptismal promises to reject sin and renew our covenant with God. Our Lenten observances are a preparation for coping with our ongoing struggle to resist the temptations we face in our lives. Just as Jesus was tested, we too are tempted almost daily. Temptation is inevitable in our Christian journey. Lent is an opportune season for us to focus on our strengths and weaknesses, to persist in prayer, repentance, fasting and abstinence and ask our Heavenly Father to grant us the strength to endure till the end just as Jesus did.

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE READINGS:**

In the first reading, God says yes to us and all creation in His covenant with Noah. In the Psalm, we ask God to teach us to live in a covenant relationship with Him and guide us in the truth. In Mark's Gospel, the Spirit drives Jesus into the desert. Jesus is "*tempted by Satan*" and he experiences the reality of our human struggles. He remains faithful to God. Jesus leaves the desert and begins his ministry of proclaiming "*the gospel of God*". Lent is our desert time to renew our yes to God and to be faithful to our baptismal covenant.

#### **READINGS:**

**First Reading:** Gen 9:8-15

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 25:4-5ab,6&7bc,8-9

**Second Reading:** 1 Pet 3:18-22

**Gospel:** Mk 1:12-15



## **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

**Celebrant:** Heavenly Father, You gave Your Son Jesus the strength to overcome all temptations. We place our prayers before You asking for Your help and guidance in resisting the temptations in our lives.

**Our response is: Merciful God, hear our prayer.**

For our Pope Francis, the bishops, the clergy, the religious and all the members of the Church, that our faith may be deepened as we strive to focus on renewing our covenant with You this Lenten season and that, through us, the Gospel message may spread far and wide; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

For all those afflicted with substance abuse, alcohol addiction and all other types of addictions, that they may experience Your healing touch and mercy; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

For the youth and young adults especially those who struggle daily with temptations due to peer pressure, job environment, financial constraints and other circumstances, that they may be blessed with discernment to make the right choices and overcome whatever problems they face in their lives; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

For all those suffering in various parts of the world, for the homeless, the starving, those living in conflict areas, those living in fear and unrest, that they may feel the power of Your presence in their lives; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

For all of us gathered here and those hearing online Eucharist, that we may focus on prayer, penance, repentance, charity and service during this Lenten season and find sustenance and healing in our daily lives; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

**Celebrant:** God our Father, we pray for faithfulness and strength to overcome the temptations we face, just like Jesus did. Accept these prayers that we place before You and help us to prepare ourselves well during this Lenten season. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



## **PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONA VIRUS:**

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for an efficacious control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We thank You for blessing the efforts of our research scientists working on the development of a vaccine. We pray that these vaccines will be effective in combating the virus and its mutants, and in controlling the spread of the pandemic. We pray that the vaccine be available for all our people even the poor and those in rural areas.

We pray for doctors, nurses and health workers who are in the frontline of this battle, that they be kept safe and have the strength and courage to continue their heroic efforts.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Commission for Liturgy  
Archdiocese of Bombay*