

# FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

February 18, 2024

## Gospel: (Mark 1:12-15)

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him. After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: *“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”*

## Reflection:

Jesus went out into the desert to be alone. He is on the brink of inaugurating his public ministry. Something new and important is about to happen. He does the natural thing: goes off alone to think things through and confront the demons that would dissuade him from his mission. Then he goes to Galilee to proclaim the gospel of God. This defines in a nutshell what Lent is all about: we, too, spend extra time by ourselves during Lent so that we can come to the Easter celebration better able to proclaim the gospel. (Living Liturgy, p.74)

## Vincenzian Meditation:

The Manual of the Society states: Vincentians are called to holiness by striving to conform ourselves to Jesus, doing God’s will, and devoting ourselves to the service of God’s suffering and poor. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is composed of women and men who seek personal holiness by works of charity. In this essential way, the Society differs from charitable associations or agencies whose principal objective is not the spiritual advancement of their members but the doing of good for others. (US Manual of the SVDP, p.53)

## Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

**How can we better take the time to pray both alone and at our Conference meetings so that we can truly proclaim the gospel of God?**

## Closing Prayer:

Jesus, model of prayer,  
**-lead us into silence and prayer.**

Jesus, model of compassion,  
**-give us merciful hearts.**

Jesus, model of meekness and mildness,  
**-make us gentle and humble of heart.**

Jesus, model of proclaiming God’s kingdom,  
**-transform us so that we can extend your kingdom. Amen**

