

LENT 2026

1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY FEB 22

Holy God of the wilderness,  
Your Spirit led Jesus into the desert—  
not away from you,  
but deeper into you.

In that lonely place of hunger and silence,  
the tempter whispered shortcuts:  
Turn stones to bread.  
Prove your worth.

Take power without suffering.  
And each time, Jesus answered with trust.  
When we are hungry—for approval, for comfort, for control—  
we know those same whispers.  
Feed yourself first. Prove yourself.  
Secure yourself. Take the easy way.

God, in this Lenten season, lead us into the wilderness we need  
—not to punish us, but to reveal what rules our hearts.

When we are tempted to fill every emptiness,  
teach us to sit with holy hunger.

When we want spectacle instead of faithfulness, teach us quiet trust.  
When we grasp for power to protect ourselves, teach us surrender.

Give us the courage to say, as Jesus did,  
“Worship the Lord your God, and serve God only.”

May your Word be bread enough.  
May your presence be proof enough.  
May your love be security enough.

And when the wilderness feels long, remind us: angels come.  
Strength comes. You do not abandon us in the desert.

Shape us through these forty days into people  
who resist what diminishes life and cling to what is true.

In the name of Christ,  
who faced temptation and remained faithful, Amen.

Journal Prompt – Wilderness and Temptation

In Matthew 4:1–11, Jesus is tempted in areas that touch basic human needs:  
sustenance, identity, and power.

Reflect on your own wilderness:

Where do you feel spiritually hungry right now?

What “quick fixes” or shortcuts are most tempting to you?

In what area of your life are you being invited to trust God more deeply instead of  
proving, grasping, or controlling?

What would it look like to respond with Scripture, prayer, or silence?

Spend time writing honestly. Lent is not about perfection—it is about noticing what  
shapes us and choosing, again and again, to engage in the dirty work of hope.