

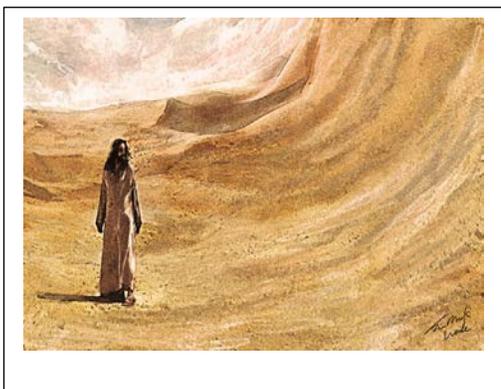
As we share this period of "Ordinary Time" we pray you discover a new awareness of God's Word and God's love and presence in your lives through these reflections.



Searching for Insights in the Gospel of Mark

1. In what way does Mark show that Jesus lived in solidarity with sinful men and women?
2. What might the dissent of the Spirit and the voice from heaven have meant for Jesus and for John, as Jesus came up out of the water and was "driven" into the wilderness?
3. Jesus' testing in the wilderness gives us a model for our own battle against the power of evil. In what ways do I experience both "beasts" and ministering angels" in my struggles with temptation as I walk the desert in my own life?

We pray... Father, through Jesus your chosen servant, you have made us all your sons and daughters. Help me accept my identity as your beloved child, through the anointing of your Holy Spirit. Guide me in times of testing, and help me to be faithful to the mission you have entrusted to me and to the church.



Our Lady of the Fields Church
Scriptural Review & Reflections
Saturday & Sunday February 3 & 4, 2018

For more information on any of the parish Faith Enrichment programs contact the Evangelization and Faith Formation Office & Staff or Dr. Little at tlittle@olfparish.com

The Gospel of Jesus: God's Suffering Servant Mark 1: 9-13

The original readers of Mark's Gospel may have been surprised that the first scenes of Jesus' public life include John's baptism and the Spirit "driving" Jesus into the desert to face Satan's temptation. Why would Mark include details such as these, when there are bigger things to do than John's ritual washing and the Lord "winning" over Satan? But to understand Mark's viewpoint one must understand Jesus's intention for a unique and total solidarity with our sinful humanity. The writer tells us that "Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee," a small, insignificant village several days walk from the wilderness of the Jordan Valley. It was so obscure it is not even mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures or other literature of the time.

Yes, Jesus had no need for John's baptism to repent of His sins. He came to be in unity with all of sinful humanity and to offer repentance on behalf of all of God's people. So, he accepts John's Baptism and goes into the desert reliving the journey of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom and demonstrating His obedience and fidelity to remember and to follow God's call to faithfulness for God's people.

Jesus comes to remove and rework all the barriers between God and humanity. It begins with the descent of the Spirit and His anointing as God's Messiah and Lord. Although he appears an ordinary Jewish man, Jesus hides his identity and goes to the desert to face and defeat Satan and to provide a lens through which the entire gospel will be viewed and understood. These are the glad tidings of Jesus, the Christ, the anointed One, Messiah and Son of God. He is beginning a new, unique and distinctive chapter of God's story.