

Homily Summary – 1st Sunday of Lent (Year A)

Short Overview: On this First Sunday of Lent, the Church places before us Adam and Eve’s fall, Psalm 51’s cry for mercy, St. Paul’s teaching on Christ as the new Adam, and Jesus’ victory over temptation in the desert. Together, these readings reveal the heart of Lent: examining whether we truly trust and obey God. Lent is a season to confront temptation, renew our baptismal promises, and grow in deeper trust of the Father through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Main Points

1. The Pattern of Sin: Distrust Leading to Disobedience

Adam and Eve’s sin began with temptation — a deceptive suggestion to doubt God’s goodness.

All sin follows this pattern:

- First comes doubt (“Did God really say...?”)
- Then mistrust (“God is holding something back.”)
- Then disobedience.

Temptation itself is not sin. Sin occurs when we freely consent to it.

Lent invites us to examine where we distrust God in our own lives.

2. Jesus: The New Adam Who Trusts Perfectly

Where Adam failed, Jesus remained faithful.

In the desert, Jesus trusted the Father completely and responded to temptation with Scripture.

His obedience reverses Adam’s disobedience.

His righteousness overcomes sin and death.

Lent invites us to imitate Christ’s trust and obedience.

3. Lent as a Desert Experience

The 40 days of Lent mirror Jesus’ 40 days in the desert.

When we draw closer to God through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, temptation often intensifies.

But this is not failure — it is spiritual growth.

The desert reveals what is in our hearts.

4. The Heart of Lent: Trust and Obedience

The prohibition in Eden was not arbitrary — it gave Adam and Eve:

- Freedom
- An opportunity to trust
- A chance to obey

The deeper question of Lent is:

Do I trust God’s vision for my life more than my own?

Lenten practices are “spiritual training” to heal wounds of distrust and strengthen obedience.

5. Preparation for Easter

At Easter, we renew our baptismal promises.

Lent prepares us to renounce sin sincerely and profess faith wholeheartedly.

The purple of Lent, the absence of the Gloria and Alleluia, the Stations of the Cross — all point us toward repentance and renewed trust.

Key Bible Verses:

- Genesis 3 – The Fall of Adam and Eve
- Psalm 51:1 – “Have mercy on me, O God.”
- Romans 5:19 – “By the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”
- Matthew 4:1–11 – The Temptation of Jesus
- 1 John 2:16 – “The world... the desire of the flesh... the pride of riches...”

Reflection Questions

1. Where in my life do I struggle most to trust God?
2. What temptation tends to repeat itself in my life? What lie is underneath it?
3. Do I believe God truly wants my happiness?
4. How are my Lenten resolutions helping me grow in trust and obedience?
5. Have I asked God to show me anything displeasing to Him? Am I open to change?
6. How will I prepare to renew my baptismal promises at Easter with sincerity?

Rhyme summary:

In Eden's garden trust was torn apart, yet Psalm fifty-one cries, "cleanse my heart."
Through Adam's fall came sin and night, but Christ stood firm and chose what's right.
In the desert dry where the devil trod, Jesus trusted fully in our Father, God.
So this Lent we learn obedience anew, and to trust, repent, and let God's love lead us through.

Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>