



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 2025

You may be using this series of seven reflections as an individual or with a group. See the separate Guide for suggestions about engaging with each week's reflection.

“... He was hungry ...” (Lk 4:2)

‘The [Jubilee Year] theme is “**Jesus Christ our Hope**” for He is the aim of our pilgrimage, and He Himself is the way, the path to follow.’
(Pope Francis)

THE GOSPEL

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for forty days being put to the test by the devil. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, ‘If you are Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.’ But Jesus replied, ‘Scripture says: Human beings live not on bread alone.’ Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, ‘I will give you all this power and splendour, for it has been handed over to me, for me to give it to anyone I choose. Do homage, then, to me, and it shall all be yours.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture says: You must do homage to the Lord your God, him alone you must serve.’ Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on the parapet of the Temple. ‘If you are Son of God,’ he said to him, ‘throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: He has given his angels orders about you, to guard you, and again: They will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Scripture says: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ Having exhausted every way of putting him to the test, the devil left him, until the opportune moment. Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside.

(Luke 4:1-14)

Read and re-read the Gospel passage, pausing for words or phrases that may ‘stand out.’

Talk with Jesus about what comes to mind or take some moments to rest in God’s loving presence.

THE DESTINATION, THE WAY, THE PATH TO FOLLOW

After 40 wilderness days, Jesus is offered seemingly rational, easy solutions: A ‘quick fix’ with miraculous bread? Personal power? An escape from human limits and suffering? He rejects it all. God’s way will leave him vulnerable, hungry, powerless. He will stay with the joys and mess of ordinary human living, in hope, trusting his Father.

FROM FELLOW PILGRIMS – FOR REFLECTION

Jesus... is born, grows, awakens to human consciousness with fellow human beings, receives into his mind and imagination the varied beauty of creation. He knows human weakness and human temptation... All this is involved in the incarnation. And more...

(Tony Kelly, The Creed by Heart, 131)

... **Hope**, therefore, is not a habit or a character trait – that you either have or you don’t – but a strength to be asked for.

(Pope Francis, Jubilee Audience Address, 11 January 2025)

Hope is precisely a new kind of strength that God instils in us, enabling us to persevere in the race, to see beyond present difficulties and to press forward to the goal of communion with him and the fullness of eternal life.

(Pope Francis, XXXIX World Youth Day, 2024)

At times we feel lost in the cosmos, pondering our identity and our destiny. Does anything make sense? Are we simply thrown into the universe without purpose or direction? Through the mystery of the Incarnation, God-made-man, our Redeemer has come among us to assure us that we are redeemed and saved. Despite the seeming absurdity of so much life and history, we trust and place our confidence in Jesus’ promise of eternal life.

(Bishop Robert Morneau, Pathways to God, 37)

I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. (*Thomas Merton, Thoughts in Solitude, 103*)

I saw a marvellous compassion that our Lord has for us for our sufferings... (*Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love, 161*)

We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become. (*Saint Clare of Assisi quoted in LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope, 229*)

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from your reading and prayer today.
- A hope, intention or prayer for the future.

You may like to write down your thoughts or a prayer.





PRAYER

When things are difficult...
say a simple Celtic prayer.
The Celts are very fond of circles,
as we see in the Celtic Cross.
Moreover, the circle is a natural symbol
of the Trinity, and so the prayer goes:

**‘O holy Three,
Around me be.’**

I have found that saying that prayer brings a certain peace – not surprising because our relationship with the Trinity is the deepest reality in our life. In naming that reality, the reality becomes more alive in our hearts, and makes its presence felt.

(Patrick O’Sullivan, Prayer and relationships, 87)



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“Jesus Christ Our Hope”, *Pope Francis, General Audience 18 Dec 2024; Kelly, Tony CSsR,*

The Creed by Heart: Re-Learning the Nicene Creed, Blackburn, Vic: Harper Collins, 1996; Merton, Thomas, Thoughts in Solitude, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998; Julian of Norwich, “I saw a marvellous compassion that our Lord hath in us for our woe, and a courteous promising of clear deliverance.” in ‘The Fifteenth Revelation’, in Warrack, Grace (Ed.), Revelations of Divine Love: Recorded by Julian, anchoress at Norwich in 1373, Springfield Il, Templegate Publishers, 2002; LeMieux Weisenburg, Melissa, Pilgrims of Hope: A 2025 Catholic Prayer and Affirmation Journal for Women, Strikersville NY: MusoWave Digital LLC, 2025; Morneau, Bishop Robert, Pathways to God: Four Weeks on Faith, Hope and Charity, New York: New York City Press, 2008;

Pope Francis, XXXIX World Youth Day, 24 Nov 2024 (Search www.vatican.va): Pope Francis, Jubilee Audience Address, 11 January 2025 (Search www.vatican.va): O’Sullivan, Patrick SJ, Prayer and Relationships: Staying Connected – An Ignatian Perspective, Melbourne: David Lovell Publishing, 2008.