

Resources on the Sunday Readings – Lent 1

Picture Reflection (p1), Bible Reading & Study Questions (p2)

See separate families' sheet.

Picture Reflection



Beloved - Lent 1 Mark 1: 9-15

Immediately after Jesus' baptism we hear how he was 'driven' into the wilderness for forty days to endure the temptations. His experience helped Jesus to understand who he was in preparation for his ministry.

This reflection is about discovering our identity as a beloved child of God which will help us as we travel on our journey of life and endure our own 'wilderness experiences'.

- What can you see in the image...who might look into that mirror?
- What do you see when you look in the mirror? How do you feel about what others see of you?
- How does your reflection in the mirror show the 'real you'.. your values, your beliefs?
- What challenges about your identity would you like to share with God?
- God sees each of us as his beloved child...how does that help you cope with life's ups and downs?

A prayer:

Holy God, open our hearts and minds to know who you made us to be.

Help us live every day knowing that we are your children.

Open our eyes to see not only others, but also ourselves, through the eyes of your love.

Amen

Bible Study Questions.

Bible Reading:

Mark 1:9-15 (NRSV)

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

In Mark's gospel the first time we meet Jesus is as an adult here at his baptism at the beginning of the gospel. Typically Mark speeds through these events and doesn't include extra details, like the three temptations Jesus faced that are included in Matthew's and Luke's gospels. Mark quickly moves to the beginning of Jesus ministry.

1. At Jesus baptism we are told the heavens are 'torn apart'. This is strong language and only Mark's gospel uses it. Matthew and Luke say the heavens 'opened'. What might it mean and what does it tell us?
2. What does Jesus baptism tell us about who he is? Is it significant that Jesus has this experience directly before he is in the wilderness for forty days?
3. Matthew's and Luke's gospels tell us Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. But Mark tells us the Spirit 'drove' Jesus into the wilderness. Why do you think Mark used this wording?
4. Why do you think Jesus needed to spend time in the wilderness? How might this have prepared him for his ministry?
5. We are told Jesus was in the wilderness for forty day. What events in the Old Testament include a time scale of forty days or forty years? Do these stories have common themes?
6. What do you think Jesus means by 'the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near'?
7. What is the 'good news'?