



a Kendall Hunt Company

## First Sunday of Lent, Year A, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



### Junior High Session

Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7

Matthew 4:1-11

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray.  
Loving God,  
guide us on our Lenten journey.  
Help us to grow closer to you.  
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.  
Amen.



## Opening Life Reflection

On this First Sunday of Lent the theme is Divine Election. During the season of Lent we open our hearts to God's call. To begin invite the youngsters to reflect on the things that distract them from God's call in their lives. Explain that fasting is a Lenten practice that helps us make room for God in our hearts and lives. Brainstorm what they might "fast" from during Lent, in order to rely on God, our true source of happiness. Write down their responses. Discuss:

- How can you open your heart to God's call this Lent?
- What Lenten practices help you grow closer to God?
- Why is God our true source of happiness?

Allow time for discussion. We are called to a loving relationship with God. During the season of Lent we are reminded to fast from the things that keep us from turning our hearts to God.



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# Listening to the Word of God

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In the Old Testament reading listen to how the first human beings were created.

Read Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7.

Allow for silence.

## Scripture Discussion Starters

- How does God form man?
- What does God plant in the garden?
- Why does the woman listen to the serpent and disobey God?
- What happens to the man and woman after they eat the forbidden fruit?

In the Gospel reading listen to how Jesus is tempted by the devil.

Read Matthew 4:1-11.

Allow for silence.

- Where does Jesus go for forty days and forty nights?
- How is Jesus tempted by the devil?
- What is Jesus' response to the devil's temptation?

## Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

Today's first reading from the Old Testament details the temptation of the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. The first human being is brought to life by the breath of God, showing the creature's full dependence on God the Creator. The garden, created by the hand of God, is a setting of beauty and nourishment for the human being.



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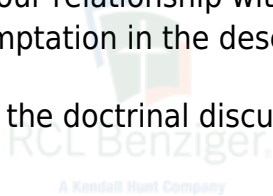
Today's passage is classically known as "the fall" because the man and woman give in to temptation. They disobey God's command and eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The result is an immediate realization of shame. The man and woman distance themselves from the love of God.

Today's Gospel shows God's loving relationship with human beings restored. Jesus does not give in to temptation like the first man and woman. Each temptation that Jesus undergoes in the desert--hunger, testing God, and idolatry--are temptations suffered by the Chosen People during their wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus. With the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, Jesus overcomes the obstacles placed before him by the devil. Today's gospel reveals how God has entered our history of sin and changed it.

## **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- How is God's love for us shown in today's readings?
- How does Jesus help to restore our relationship with God?
- How does the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert help us during Lent?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]



## **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

### **Divine Election**

All human beings are called to communion with God. We are called to a loving relationship with God our creator. The Church teaches that this loving relationship is a vital bond that is initiated and sustained by God. However, God created us with the freedom to make our own choices and sometimes we choose to sin and reject this divine call.

God, however, refuses to give up on us. God sent Jesus to redeem humanity from sin. Through his victory over the temptations in the desert, and his surrender on the cross, Jesus shows the right response to Divine Election.

God continues to love the world in spite of sin. Divine Election calls us to go forth into the world, as Jesus was sent, to be a living sign of hope and love.



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- What is Divine Election?
  - Why does God refuse to give up on us?
  - How can you be a sign of hope and love in the world?

# The Gospel in Life

How can you keep your heart focused on God this week?

## Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 26

