

We Respond

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 50)

ANTIPHON: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

RESPONSE: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

LECTOR: Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. **R.**

LECTOR: My offences truly I know them; my sin is always before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done. **R.**

LECTOR: A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **R.**

LECTOR: Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

Or

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will trust.

TODAY'S READINGS Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

NEXT WEEK (2nd Sunday of Lent, Year A) Genesis 12:1-4; Psalm 32; 2 Timothy 1:8-10; Matthew 17:1-9

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Christ's love touches us all



26 February 2023 1st Sunday Lent Year A

The ancient texts in the book of Genesis, which speak to us of creation and then our fall from grace, provide us with the most marvellous insights into our nature and the nature of the world about us. Creationists who insist only on a literal interpretation of such biblical texts do themselves and us a great disservice, precisely because they fail to grasp the depth of meaning that lies within them.

We believe that the whole of the bible was written under the inspiration of God and has been preserved so that we can grow in knowledge and understanding and deepen our relationship with the Lord. Thus, we are told at the end of today's first reading: "Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked."

The temptation of our first parents that left them exposed was not simply a matter of disobedience, eating some fruit which they had been told not to eat. The temptation was presented by the serpent in these terms: "No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil."

We can put this another way: human beings have certainly discovered the difference between good and evil, but

tragically we continue to create chaos in our own lives and in the lives of those around us by being proud enough to think that this is our world and we can do what we like with it. Doesn't this sum up perfectly the source of all sin and the very nature of sin? The first eleven chapters of Genesis give us a graphic description of the chaos that ensues once human beings try to wrest the world from God.

Fascinatingly, the message of salvation begins in chapter 12 with the promise to Abraham of a saviour, and the rest of the Old Testament is the up and down story of the people through whom that saviour would come into the world. On this First Sunday of Lent, the Church is inviting us once again to take stock and recognise that it is possible to heal the hurt of sin, so that we individually and the whole of creation, can be redeemed.

St Paul shows us how the new Adam, Christ, conquers death, the consequence of sin, and offers us new life. And as we listen to the temptations in Matthew's Gospel, we see how Jesus refuses to be lured into the misuse of power and control. He has come to set us free, so that we, who have been created in the image of God, can learn to love again.

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