

Dear Beloved,

The readings for this the first Sunday of Lent are all about temptations. Temptations are never merely to get us to commit a particular sin but always to distract us from obedience to our Lord.

Whenever you are tempted think , do I want this or do I want to follow Jesus.



I spent Friday with my brother who today(Sat) tested positive to Covid, so I will not be greeting people before or after the service at Cooma, I will also be keeping my distance, wearing a mask and we have taken measures so that I do not touch communion.

We have also postponed the service and AGM for Jerangle.

Blessings

Wendy

AGMS

Cooma 26th February

Jerangle TBA

Parish 2nd April

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Morning Tea after the Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday  
please volunteer for the roster.

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PTO →

Wendy has Lent Study Books for group or private use.  
They are \$12 each Please see Wendy

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No Lent studies in Rectory this year but please join  
an existing group or form your own.

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Autumn Open Garden Day 16th April  
Please pot plants up now and tell Nella how you can help

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Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9.30 all Welcome

Please volunteer for the roster, well in advance.

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Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Glenn Fletcher .. for his recovery

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Scott's wife Jennie.

Beattie Russell  
and Jenni Roberts  
in Yallambie.

--

Leanne Lowery

Mary Mitchell

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Cooma

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The New Catholic priest Father Mark Croker  
as he ministers from Bombala through to the mountains

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for each other that we may be salt and light in this community

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People everywhere who are living through war or disasters of every kind.

26 Feb 2023

## The Holy Communion - THIRD ORDER

### HYMN TIS 131 Father of heaven

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, **be with you all. And also with you.**

**Our Lord Jesus Christ said: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.** Matthew 22.37–40, Mark 12.30–31

### Sentence

We do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Matthew 4.4

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and one another: call forth our penitence and acts of love, and strengthen us to face our mortality, so that we may look with confidence for your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.' <sup>1</sup> Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?' <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the snake, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die."' <sup>4</sup> 'You will not certainly die,' the snake said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> 'For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' <sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

### Psalms 32

<sup>1</sup> Blessed are those whose sin is forgiven: whose iniquity is put away.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed are those to whom the Lord imputes no blame: and in whose spirit there is no guile.

<sup>3</sup> For whilst I held my tongue: my bones wasted away with my daily complaining.

<sup>4</sup> Your hand was heavy upon me day and night: and my moisture was dried up like a drought in summer.

<sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you: and my iniquity I did not hide;

<sup>6</sup> I said 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord': and so you forgave the wickedness of my sin.

<sup>7</sup> For this cause shall everyone that is faithful make their prayer to you in the day of trouble:  
and in the time of the great water-flood, it shall not come near them.

<sup>8</sup> You are a place to hide me in, you will preserve me from trouble: you will surround me with deliverance on every side.

<sup>9</sup> I will instruct you and direct you in the way that you should go: I will fasten my eye upon you, and give you counsel.

<sup>10</sup> 'Be not like horse or mule, that have no understanding: whose forward course must be curbed with bit and bridle.'

<sup>11</sup> Great tribulations remain for the ungodly: but whoever puts their trust in the Lord, mercy embraces them on every side.

<sup>12</sup> Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, and be glad: and shout for joy, all you that are true of heart.

## Romans 5.12-21

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned – <sup>13</sup> To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. <sup>15</sup> But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! <sup>16</sup> Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: the judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! <sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Matthew 4.1-11

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.' <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."' <sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup> 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" <sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. <sup>9</sup> 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.' <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" <sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

### *The Sermon*

#### **The Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith: receive the prayers we offer.

Response: God of all mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

## CONFESSION

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off. Let us then ask for mercy, confessing our sins in penitence and faith,

**Heavenly Father, you have loved us with an everlasting love, but we have broken your holy laws and have left undone what we ought to have done. We are sorry for our sins and turn away from them. For the sake of your Son who died for us, forgive us, cleanse us, and change us. By your Holy Spirit, enable us to live for you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God is slow to anger and full of compassion, forgiving all who humbly repent and trust in his Son as Saviour and Lord. God therefore forgives you in Christ Jesus, in whom there is no condemnation. **Amen.**

## THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.** The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also, with you.**

## HYMN TIS 580 Lead us heavenly Father

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God for ever.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, making us in your own image. We praise you for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by his death on the cross and rising to new life offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people. Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

And now, gracious God, we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine, and pray that we who receive them, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, according to our Saviour's word, in remembrance of his suffering and death, may share his body and blood.

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread, and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' We eat this bread and drink this cup **to**

**proclaim the death of the Lord.** We do this until he returns. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

Father, as we recall his saving death and glorious resurrection, may we who share these gifts be renewed by your Holy Spirit and united in the body of your Son. Bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom, there to feast at your table and join in your eternal praise:

**Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive praise and honour and glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.**

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread. The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen

God of mercy, may we who have shared in this holy meal know your forgiveness in our lives, bring your reconciliation to others, and be a sign of your wholeness in this broken world.

**Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

## Hymn TIS 201 King of Glory

### Blessing

Christ our Saviour draw you to himself, that you may find in him crucified a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sin forgiven and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

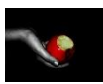
### Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **in the name of Christ. Amen**



Today is the first Sunday in Lent. A time when we come in penitence and prayer to examine ourselves, to repent of all our sins and prepare ourselves for Easter. At one time it was traditional that new converts spent Lent fasting and studying and were then baptised on Easter Sunday. And not so long-ago part of our preparation would have included cleaning our house, removing any yeast and using up the leftovers by eating pancakes last Tuesday, in readiness for the solemnness of Ash Wednesday. Nowadays, few people act out our preparation in such a way, but it is still worthwhile being extra aware of our actions through Lent and mentally preparing ourselves.

Many Christians give up something for lent, a form of fast, as a way of reminding ourselves to be more diligent in all our spiritual practices. We are all human and it is worthwhile taking this opportunity to put away any little questionable habits that have crept into our lives and take up some new helpful habits like increasing our prayer life and having more time with our Lord. It is much more appropriate to pick up good practices than give up something trivial.



Our readings today centre on temptation: the very first temptation, Jesus being tempted in the wilderness, Paul's dissertation on sin and death plus the Psalmist's rejoicing in forgiveness.

Hebrews (5:15) tells us that Jesus was tempted in every possible way, so it is no surprise that after Jesus' baptism, when God said, '*this is my beloved son*', a true mountain top experience, when his sense of God's calling and love had been dramatically confirmed, he had to face the whispering voices and recognise them for what they were. In this instance he was tempted to take the easy route, distorting his true vocation: the vocation to be truly a human being, to be God's person, to be a servant of the world and other people. Jesus' temptations are part of the divine plan, he is led by the spirit into the wilderness, and is part of his obedience to God. Jesus needed to face these temptations first up and win at least an initial victory over them. If he cannot defeat them now, they will meet him when he is not prepared, in the middle of his work and they may overwhelm him.



Jesus sees through the trap. He answers each time with scripture and with God. He is committed to living off God's word; trusting God completely, without setting up tests to put God on the spot. He is committed to loving and serving God alone. The flesh may scream for satisfaction; the world may beckon seductively; the devil himself may offer undreamed of power; but Israel's living God, the one Jesus knew as Father, offered the reality of what it means to be human, to be a true Israelite, to be Messiah.

What are you tempted with? Is it selfishness, stuff, or power. Whatever, God is the true fulfilment of all you desire.

Originally, the word in our passage translated as Satan was simply the 'accuser' the one who acted as prosecuting attorney in the heavenly court but after the Old Testament was complete, he was seen in general thought as the one who lured humans into sin. It is common these days to deny the existence of the devil or Satan. On the one hand blaming Satan for our sin is an inadequate escape from personal responsibility but on the other we need to acknowledge the reality of an evil greater than our own individual inclinations to evil. This acknowledgment also prevents us from regarding our human opponents as the ultimate enemy, allowing us to see them, as well as ourselves, as being attacked.



The biblical texts Jesus used as his weapons are all taken from the story of Israel in the wilderness. Jesus had come through the waters of baptism, like Israel had come through the Red Sea. Jesus had to face in forty days and nights the equivalent of Israel's forty years in the desert. But where Israel failed time and time again, Jesus, the true son of God, succeeds. Here at last is a true Israelite, he has come to do what God always wanted Israel to do, bring light to the world.



Further back still in the history of God's interaction with humanity is the story of Adam and Eve in the garden. Living in total peace with creation and God. They were given only one command: Don't eat from the tree; one temptation: eat the fruit to gain wisdom; one devastating result; they are banned from the garden, banned from their close and tranquil relationship with God. And humanity suffered from the lack of this devoted relationship for multiple generations, until Jesus healed the rift. Jesus kept his eyes on his father and so launched the mission to undo those results of human rebellion.



The first temptation is not a question about whether Jesus is the son of God (the 'if' can be translated as 'since') but about what it means to be the son of God. Will he live a life of a mostly unidentified servant of God or will he take a shortcut. Not only is Jesus hungry but one messianic expectation was that he would reproduce the miracle of the manna in the wilderness, thus providing abundant food for all. One loaf would have fed Jesus, and denied his trust in God, but the temptation to turn the stones (plural) is also to use his divine power to provide food for all and thus gain him political power.

The temptation to throw himself off the high point of the temple is for him to make a sensational demonstration that he is the son of God. The devil's quote from scripture is not wrong or faulty understanding but is an illustration that

even scripture wrongly used can point to an alternative path rather than the path of obedient suffering that Jesus chose. Jesus chose humility and pain over angelic help as the path to messiahship, but later, and on other occasions. the angels did minister to him.



The last temptation is for Jesus to rule the nations of the world. The devil's demand is to challenge Jesus to accept the status quo of the rebellious state of the world, to acknowledge that selfishness and practical atheism prevail and to fit in with it. But Jesus will not deviate from worshipping the one true God, even for the noble sounding purpose of taking over all the kingdoms of the world. At the end of this gospel, on a different mountain, Jesus announces that he has received all authority on earth, but this authority is from God, and after the cross.



Jesus would meet the tempter again in various guises, protesting to him, through Peter, not to go to the cross, mocking him through the priests and bystanders as he hung on the cross, and many other daily temptations that we are not told about and on the cross with the words 'if you are God's son'. This is no accident. When Jesus refused to go the way of the tempter, he was embracing the way of the cross. The enticing whispers, those alluring temptations, were designed to distract him from his central vocation, the road to which his baptism had committed him, the path of servanthood that would lead to suffering and death. Those temptations were meant to stop him from carrying out God's calling, to redeem Israel and the world.

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The temptations we all face, day by day and at critical moments of decision and vocation in our lives, may well be different to the ones Jesus faced that day, but they have exactly the same point. They are simply trying to entice us away from God. They are not merely trying to entice us into committing a particular sin, they are trying to distract us, to turn us aside from the path of servanthood. God has a costly but wondrously glorious plan for each of us. The enemy will do everything possible to distract us and thwart God's purpose. But we can use the same defence as Jesus, store scripture in your heart, and use it. Keep your eyes on God and trust him for everything. Remember your calling to bring God's light into the world.