

**FEBRUARY 18, 2024  
FIRST SUNDAY  
IN LENT**



*Jesus brings the good news of God's reign.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

|                  |                        |                                    |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday</b>    | <b>Mark 1:9-15</b>     | <b>Temptation of Jesus</b>         |
| <b>Monday</b>    | <b>Genesis 9:8-17</b>  | <b>God's promise to Noah</b>       |
| <b>Tuesday</b>   | <b>1 Peter 3:18-22</b> | <b>Suffering for doing right</b>   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | <b>Romans 14:13-23</b> | <b>Do not make someone stumble</b> |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | <b>Psalms 16:5-11</b>  | <b>Song of trust</b>               |
| <b>Friday</b>    | <b>James 3:13-18</b>   | <b>Two kinds of wisdom</b>         |
| <b>Saturday</b>  | <b>Psalms 25:1-10</b>  | <b>Prayer for guidance</b>         |
| <b>Sunday</b>    | <b>Mark 8:31-38</b>    | <b>Jesus predicts his death</b>    |

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

*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."*

**Mark 1:14-15 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty God, you love what you have created; we thank you for your protection and that you come to bring us peace, joy, and love through Jesus Christ, your Beloved Son. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, you remember the lowly and the hungry; we thank you for remembering us with your love and with this meal that gives us strength. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the good news of Jesus give you joy.



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**HYMN OF THE WEEK** 

*Jesus Calls Us; o'er  
The Tumult*

**taking  
faith  
home**

**WEEKLY MILESTONES** 

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS** 

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How would you survive in the wilderness?
- How would you describe God's reign to someone?

**DEVOTIONS** 

*Read: Mark 1:9-15.*

It is easy to miss the power and drama of Jesus' message that now is the time for the kingdom of God. His message seems so brief. Yet, in Jesus, God's reign is taking on all other claims to power and glory. The arrest of John the Baptist calls attention to another kind of power, the kind that seeks to control and destroy. In a world ordered by inequalities, unfairness, and brutality, another power is needed that can take on such harmful ways. That power is seen in Jesus' ability to take on Satan's deceitful testing of him. We also see it in Jesus being protected from wild beasts that could otherwise cause harm. God's justice and mercy has always championed life, love, and peace. Jesus, the Beloved Son of God, now steps out of his baptismal waters with the power of God's Spirit and takes on all forms of evil and death. We are now called to join this kingdom by turning away from destructive powers and trusting this good and awesome news and kingdom that Jesus brings.

*Discuss: How do you see God's kingdom in Jesus bringing you and the world good news?*

*Pray: Merciful and loving God, give us courage to trust the power and presence of your reign of life, love, and peace through Jesus Christ, your Beloved Son, our Redeemer and Lord. Amen.*

**SERVICE** 

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you bring Jesus' message of love and peace to others?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS** 

The cross is an ancient symbol of the Christian faith. It reminds us Jesus died that we may live with God forever and is a reminder of a way of life for Jesus' followers. Lay out a purple cloth (the color for repentance and Lent) and place seven votive candles or battery-operated votive candles in the shape of a cross on the cloth. Light one of the candles this first week in Lent. Sit in silence for a moment while looking at the cross.

*Then pray: Dear God, we give you thanks for your steadfast love and goodness that forgives and renews us in Christ. Amen.*



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)