



First Sunday of Lent

Reflection by Sr. Ann Casagrande, DW

The readings for this Sunday bring us into the spirit of this Lenten journey. The first reading from Deuteronomy speaks to me of God's love for God's people. It was a critical time for the



Israelites when God led them out of slavery in Egypt and fed them as they wandered in the desert.

The desert theme returns in the gospel reading also. Jesus, after being baptized and hearing the words, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.", leaves the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert.

I like to imagine Jesus in the desert during those days. Was he aware that this was the beginning of his public ministry? Did he have questions as to the next steps? Was he nervous or unsure about the future? Sometimes, I find myself thinking that if journaling was popular then, won't it have been wonderful to have the journal of Jesus? But then, I realize that Jesus was led by the Spirit and did his work, his discernment, his prayer during this time. We too are led by the Spirit to do our own work – which varies at different times in our lives. The quiet time, the time to step aside and look at ourselves, our life, our relationship with God and others is a critical time for us as it was for Jesus and the Israelites.

After the days in the desert, Jesus was tempted by the devil. I like to think of the temptations as the temptation to power, prestige, and privilege. Perhaps I think of this because of the time during which we are living.

I like to reflect on these in my own life – where is my power? How is it used? How can I empower? Do I have privileges that others do not have? How can I enable others with the privileges that I may have? What are my expectations in terms of prestige – do I feel entitled in certain areas? How do I offer the prestige and respect to every human being? How do I respect all of creation?

I close this reflection with a thought that Sr. Cathy Murtha, DW shared in one of her Fire In Our Hearts reflections:

Do not imagine there is but one way that leads to Wisdom.
There is but your way – follow it to the end, and you will find Her.