



## *Sojourn in the Wilderness*

*First Sunday in Lent*

*Youth Ministries Day*

*Luke 4:1–13*

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.*

*February 14, 2016*

## **Thoughts for the Week**

**"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ." (Mark 1:1)**

That's the first line of the Gospel of Mark, "The beginning of the good news." then we see Jesus calling disciples to follow, into deeper lives of good news.

In the New Year, it reminds us, the good news only began in the Gospel of Mark. The good news continues; the Christ story continues in our lives, too.

In the New Year, reflecting on the year past and the year to come, what good news from Jesus beckons you? Is it the good news of healing, as so many experienced with Jesus?

Is it the good news of Jesus the teacher, inviting you more deeply into scripture and study? Or is it Jesus inviting into a deeper relationship with God and a life of prayer?

Or is the Jesus who lived among the poor and marginalized people, inviting you further into solidarity with the challenges of our neighborhood and world?

Here, the good news challenges the world as it is, opening to the newness God keeps bringing -- renewal and resurrection.

Or is it the good news that you are forgiven, and the past need no longer bind you?

Letting go of the past, even saying "no" to what does not give us Life can open us to a deeper "yes" to God.

What's the good news beckoning you?

## ***Prayer for the New Year***

*God, for this year past: thank you.*

*Release me from what no longer  
brings me Life.*

*God, for this year ahead:*

*lead me into gentle anticipation  
that You are in me,*

*You greet me, in each moment and experience.*

*Open me anew to the Good News  
you would have for me.*

*Lead me more deeply into a life-with-others,  
so the good news we experience can be shared  
and encourage others. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## **Prayer Thought – Luxembourg**

God of all persons, we give thanks for the many blessings of creation. We offer our praise and gratitude for knowing us and loving each of us as your beloved children.

We uphold the concerns of all who are gathered here this day. We confess our failings and seek your forgiveness for the times we have not been the persons of peace you created us to be.

We pray for the nations of the world, and today especially for the people of Luxembourg. May they know peace.

Guide us in being wise stewards of Earth's resources so all may benefit from the bounty you provide.

Hear our prayer, O God, as we offer ourselves to be instruments of your peace in our world. In the name of the Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen.

## **Stewardship Thought**

*"I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O Lord, have given to me."  
(Deuteronomy 26:10)*

This line from the Old Testament offers two challenges.

First, do you give to God from your "first fruits", the best that you have to offer, or do you give from what is leftover?

Second, do you remember that everything you have, has been given to you by God?

Ask God for a grateful and generous heart, every day.

## **Quote for the Week**

*“Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell ‘em:  
‘Certainly I can!’  
Then get busy and find out how to do it.”*

*Theodore Roosevelt*