

# Readings + First Sunday in Lent, year A + 22 February 2026

## Prayer of the Day

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

## First Reading 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 till it and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

<sup>3</sup> <sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; <sup>5</sup>for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

<sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

## Psalmody Psalm 32

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

**“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

**Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

## Second Reading Romans 5:12-19

*Paul writes:* <sup>12</sup>Just as sin came into the world through one human, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— <sup>13</sup>for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup>Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

<sup>15</sup>But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the trespass of one, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one, Jesus Christ,

abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup> And the gift is not like the effect of the sin of one human. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup> If, because of the trespass of one, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore just as trespass of one person led to condemnation for all, so the act of righteousness of one person leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of one the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous.

## **Holy Gospel**    Matthew 4:1-11

*Only Matthew and Luke give the full story of Jesus' temptation; Mark only mentions that he was tempted. Matthew's order is different from Luke's: Matthew is bread, temple, mountain; Luke is bread, mountain, temple. Also, only Matthew has the part about angels caring for Jesus afterward.*

<sup>1</sup> Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. <sup>2</sup> He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward was famished. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came and said to him, "If

you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup> But Jesus answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,

<sup>6</sup> saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'God will command his angels concerning you,' and

'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "Again it is written,

'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; <sup>9</sup> and said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to the devil, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve God alone.'"

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left Jesus, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.