

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 6, 2022

### FATHER CHARLIE'S INTRODUCTION TO LENT

In his journal “Metanoia, the Journey with Christ into Conversion,” Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR writes this: “In the very beginning of Mark’s Gospel Jesus says, ‘This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel.’ The word ‘repent’ in Greek has the root ‘metanoia.’ At the very beginning of the Scriptures, Jesus is inviting us to metanoia.”



And so, we begin the season of Lent, allowing this Greek concept to guide our journey...a journey of something that goes much deeper than a ‘turning away from sin,’ although that is certainly part of it.

As Christians we are taught to repent from our sins and do penance to be saved. Some of us grew up feeling exaggerated guilt or shame, maybe even told we were condemned, because of what we had done or who we were, because of personal failures and divorces, struggles with addictions, etc. The focus on the bad left out the possible – that something better might come about for our souls by the end of the struggle. We CAN get on the right path.

If Lent is our journey to the cross, to getting to know the path to salvation ... metanoia is our way, not just for a season. It is a continual process of turning away from many of the things of the world – from temptations, indifference, lies and sin to discover a deeper union with Christ. This openness to come to know Christ is made up of moments of conversion (metanoia), when a person’s life is re-oriented to Christ, when he or she by grace enters into a relationship with Jesus, and thus enters into a relationship with the community of believers, the Church. That is our Lenten journey. Let’s enter in – go farther – together – on the path to salvation.

### SMALL GROUPS – DEEPER IN LENT

#### METANOIA VIDEO

We invite you, most especially within your small group, to watch “Metanoia” produced under the direction of Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR, president of the acclaimed Franciscan University in Steubenville. The series need not be viewed in sequence – each episode provides longtime Catholics and seekers new perspectives. Watch on your own before you gather - or when you come together. The Small Group reflections point to many of the same insights.

We encourage for week I of Lent for our small groups to watch the trailer and then watch Episode 2. Question of the week: What must I do to inherit eternal life? How do I get to Heaven? How do I know I will?

**Start here: Metanoia – Series - <https://thewildgooseisloose.com/metanoia>**

**The series is free to watch, once you sign in.**

### #PRAY40 – Free Hallow App

Pray every day this Lent! Join the #Pray40 Challenge in the Hallow App featuring daily Lenten meditations on Jesus’ Last Seven Words from His Cross. We were introduced to Hallow through the ministry office of the Diocese of Orlando.

Hallow is the #1 Catholic app for prayer – a prayer tool for everyone no matter where they are in their prayer life. The app 3,000 audio-guided sessions designed to help you grow closer to God. Content includes: Daily Gospel Readings, Daily Rosary, Daily Saint; Meditations on Humility, Gratitude and Calmness; Mental Health content from Catholic experts; and much more! **You can learn more and download the app by going to [Hallow.com](https://www.hallow.com)**

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – DT 26: 4-10; ROM 10: 8-13; LK 4: 1-13 [full text below]

## SMALL GROUP REFLECTIONS

"Three things are necessary for the salvation of man: to know what he ought to believe; to know what he ought to desire; and to know what he ought to do." St. Thomas Aquinas

1. **Do you know your answer to all three?** Discuss how knowing what you believe, what you want, what you must do helps us navigate the desert days and devil encounters. *The Second Reading from Paul offers direction - If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved .. enriching all who call upon him...*

2. Jesus is baptized, then heads to the desert to pray and to figure out his mission. For the baptized, for those with questions about God, the need is no different – praying in the starkness of the desert to think about the wrong ways and right ways to live out that mission (and even confronting the devil along the way). **Where do you place prayer as a priority in your desert roaming?** Where is your desert space (think of the place that is quiet, empty, isolated place to experience God)?

3. Catholic Writer Alice Camille says this is what the devil was peddling in the Gospel - all the bread you can eat, power and glory, and angels for protection. And what makes that also more attractive – the offer was all NOW, immediate gratification. She writes: We have a choice - now or never (we never get to heaven) or now and forever (salvation).

**Which of the devil's three temptations** - self-satisfaction, power, or security - has the strongest allure for you? What helps you to resist such temptations or earthly needs?

**METANOIA** – [ (n) Greek ] the journey of changing one's mind, heart, self, way of life; conversion; turning around

Perhaps the most important question every person needs to be able to answer is this: What do I need to do in order to inherit eternal life? How do I get to Heaven? How do I know I will? Many people believe it is enough to simply be a good person, to avoid breaking the commandments, and to go to church. Although all these things are extremely important in the journey towards heaven, not enough attention is paid to the importance of following Jesus. In fact, Jesus is rarely mentioned. However, Jesus is THE way to heaven and being in a relationship with him is key to inheriting the Kingdom of God.

How do you intentionally direct your heaven goal to a life with Jesus? This Lent, what is one step you can take that gets you closer, opens your mind, turns something around? **Where do you hope your "Metanoia" journey takes you?**

**Pope Francis asks us to pray for peace and the people of Ukraine:**

Loving God,  
We pray for the people of Ukraine,  
for all those suffering or afraid,  
that you will be close to them and protect them.  
We pray for world leaders,  
for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their  
choices. We pray for the world

that in this moment of crisis,  
we may reach out in solidarity  
to our brothers and sisters in need.  
May we walk in your ways  
so that peace and justice  
become a reality for the people of Ukraine  
and for all the world. Amen.

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## Reading I Dt 26:4-10

Moses spoke to the people, saying:  
“The priest shall receive the basket from you  
and shall set it in front of the altar of the LORD, your  
God.  
Then you shall declare before the Lord, your God,  
‘My father was a wandering Aramean  
who went down to Egypt with a small household  
and lived there as an alien.  
But there he became a nation  
great, strong, and numerous.  
When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us,  
imposing hard labor upon us,  
we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers,  
and he heard our cry  
and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.  
He brought us out of Egypt  
with his strong hand and outstretched arm,  
with terrifying power, with signs and wonders;  
and bringing us into this country,  
he gave us this land flowing with milk and honey.  
Therefore, I have now brought you the firstfruits  
of the products of the soil  
which you, O LORD, have given me.’  
And having set them before the LORD, your God,  
you shall bow down in his presence.”

## Reading II Rom 10:8-13

Brothers and sisters:  
What does Scripture say?  
The word is near you in your mouth and in your  
heart—that is, the word of faith that we preach—,  
for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is  
Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him  
from the dead, you will be saved.  
For one believes with the heart and so is justified,  
and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.  
For the Scripture says,  
No one who believes in him will be put to shame.  
For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek;  
the same Lord is Lord of all,  
enriching all who call upon him.

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved.”

## Gospel Lk 4:1-13

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the  
Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for  
forty days, to be tempted by the devil.  
He ate nothing during those days,  
and when they were over he was hungry.  
The devil said to him,  
“If you are the Son of God,  
command this stone to become bread.”

Jesus answered him,  
“It is written, One does not live on bread alone.”  
Then he took him up and showed him  
all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant.

The devil said to him,  
“I shall give to you all this power and glory;  
for it has been handed over to me,  
and I may give it to whomever I wish.  
All this will be yours, if you worship me.”

Jesus said to him in reply,  
“It is written - You shall worship the Lord, your  
God, and him alone shall you serve.”

Then he led him to Jerusalem,  
made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and  
said to him,  
“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down  
from here, for it is written: He will command his  
angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With  
their hands they will support you,  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.”

Jesus said to him in reply,  
“It also says,  
You shall not put the Lord, your God, to  
the test.”

When the devil had finished every temptation, he  
departed from him for a time.