

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT: MARCH 9, 2025

On the First Sunday of Lent, the Gospel reading focuses on Jesus' temptation in the desert (Luke 4: 1-13)

Theme: "In the Desert, Hold on to God"

Hymn: "We are standing on Holy ground" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdminhRbHvE>.

Scripture: Luke 4:4

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

Reflection: As we begin the first week of Lent, we are invited into the **DESERT**—a place where everything is stripped away. It is a space where we are left to face the core of who we are. In the desert, we confront our vulnerabilities, fears, and sometimes even our doubts. For some, the desert is a place of deep encounter with God, a space for renewal and transformation. But for others, it can feel like a place of pain, loneliness, dryness, and uncertainty. We have all experienced seasons like these in one way or another. For me, the desert is a place that reveals my vulnerability to myself. In the emptiness of self, I hear God's voice, and to this voice, I cling. It is this voice that makes me rejoice. So, *what deserts do we often find ourselves in or get caught in? In those moments of challenge, who do we hold on to?* Jesus, in temptation, testing, and isolation, holds on to God. *(Pause)*



Emerging from the Desert: As women with hearts for mission, we can see the desert as a place of preparation for the work God is calling us to - a sacred space of Holy darkness. Just as Moses, John the Baptist, and Jesus emerged from their desert experiences empowered and ready for their divine purpose, we, too, are called to emerge from our own desert seasons with renewed strength and purpose. Rooted in being a "presence of hope," the desert we find ourselves in should not stop or weaken us from bringing hope to a world marked by hopelessness, dryness, and loneliness; rather, it should strengthen us.

Lent is a time and a place of preparation for the work God is calling us to – it is a holy darkness.

Wake-up Call:

Through the desert experience, what is God calling you to or preparing you for?
How will you respond to this call?

Hymn: "Holy darkness"—<https://youtu.be/3Rg4iuzmiXY?si=QH35jkGHfcg-Bq6>

My Prayer: O Lord,
In the desert's quiet, I find my space,
Stripped of everything, yet filled with Your grace.
In the emptiness of self, I hear Your voice,
A quiet strength that helps me find joy.
Through this holy darkness, You lead me on,
Transforming my heart and bringing anew.
May I rise from this space, strong and true,
To share Your hope with those who need of You.



Chant *(for the experiences, we thank god)* All glory to you God, Father, son and Holy Spirit.

- Reflection shared by Sr. Juliana Mary Sangma, RNDM