

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 20 - 21, 2021**

Lent Begins/1st Sunday of Lent

**Gospel reading**

Mark 1:12-15

At once the Spirit drove him out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

**Homily helper / connection to stewardship / giving / charity / almsgiving**

* Lent is a perfect time to refocus on Stewardship
* The 3 Pillars of Lent -- Prayer-Fasting-Almsgiving
  + Make a *new commitment* to:
    - Prayer - daily, with God - even just 5 minutes, find something new to try -- Examen, Rosary, Novena, etc.
    - Fasting - Fridays, yes, from chocolate, TV, social media, something -- but do it.
    - Giving - to the parish and/or Annual Diocesan Appeal - give to mission-work (something that serves the poor)

**Appeal Script/Talking Points**

*(Use these talking points during In-Pew Solicitation weekend on February 20-21 to thank your parishioners and ask them to support the Appeal online.)*

* In-Pew Weekend is here! I hope you have taken time to consider how you and your family can support this year’s Annual Diocesan Appeal, which helps to engage the next generation, provide for those in need and build Catholic communities in many important ways.
* Our goal as a parish this year is <$AMT> and I hope you will join me in helping to meet and exceed this year’s goal!
* There is so much need and we’re blessed at <PARISH NAME> to receive assistance from the Appeal. [List the blessings and parish ministries supported by the Appeal. For example: We have a beautiful church, we have a great school, or we have a wonderful religious education program.]
* I know it’s not always easy to support the church, whether that is our parish, or the diocese and I know it’s not always easy for me to stand up here and ask you week after week.
* But, please know the importance of what the Appeal is doing and the impact it’s making in the lives of others.
* Considering everything going on with the pandemic, our whole lives have shifted to online – we’ve livestreamed masses, provided virtual Bible studies, and relied on social media as our primary method of communication with our parishioners. Today, we will rely on technology once again – this time for our support of the Appeal.
* You know… growing up, my mother/father/parents always told me to pay attention, sit still and be quiet during Mass. There was an expectation to remove all distractions. And now, I’m going to tell you to do the exact opposite of that – get out your phones! 😊
* We now have a secure and convenient way to make your 2021 Appeal commitment online.
* *At this time, the digital usher puts up the website on the livestream so people can see the address. For those in the pews, you should strongly consider putting the website address on pieces of paper (in a large font) and taping them on the backs of the seats or pews. You don’t have to do every seat and you can spread them out – you will just want to make sure people can see them easily from where they are sitting.*
* I encourage you to open up the internet browser on your phone now and type in <https://richmondcatholicfoundation.org/appeal/> where you’ll be able to make an ongoing recurring gift, a 12-month pledge or a one-time gift. That website again is <https://richmondcatholicfoundation.org/appeal/>.
* Note that we will post a brief video in the comments section of our livestream that walks you through the website and shows you how to make your gift online.

* *At this time, the digital usher puts up the online giving tutorial on the livestream so people can access it if they need help filling out the form.*
* Even though we are not physically handing out in-pew pledge envelopes as normal, the idea is still the same. The in-pew process is a chance for all of us who have not yet given to make our gifts to the Appeal.
* The collective spirit we bring to this effort today will be a major step to our success with this year’s Appeal. Keep in mind: the more we collect, the more we receive back through the parish sharing formula of the Appeal.
* At this time, we would like to pause for about five minutes so anyone who has not yet given can go online and make their pledge or gift.
* If you have already given, thank you very much. During these five minutes, perhaps you could offer prayers for the success of this year’s Appeal.
* ***PAUSE FOR FIVE MINUTES.***
* *After five minutes:* Thank you for taking the time to fill out the online form and for supporting this year’s Appeal. We look forward to updating you on our Appeal progress soon. God bless.

**Intercession**

That the good works of Annual Diocesan Appeal may be enhanced through our renewed commitment to prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

Here we are. Another Lenten season is upon us. This is the year I’m going to make it all 6 weeks. I’m going to give up Coke and candy bars. I’m going to fast on Fridays, and I’m going to pray in the morning before work/school. I’m committed. (By the way, how are your New Year’s resolutions going?)

Don’t worry! We’ve all been there. Every year. All you have to do is try. All you have to do is try *each day*. Then, when you forget and eat something you shouldn’t have, or didn’t pray in the morning, just start over the next day. The biggest thing is to NOT GIVE UP.

Ask God for help this Lent. Ask him to walk with you, to guide you, to strengthen you. Then do your part - One. Day. At. A. Time. - and be sure to pray, fast and give. (Have you made your pledge to the Annual Diocesan Appeal?)

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

As the Lenten season begins, be sure to add the Annual Diocesan Appeal to your almsgiving. Details are in the bulletin.

**Social media posts/content**

Photo: Three Pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving

Copy: “Your gift to the Annual Diocesan Appeal helps the poor right here in our community.”