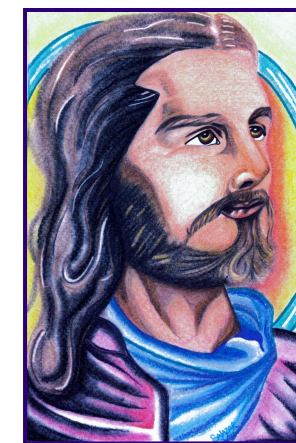


# Resisting Temptation



Art by J. Salazar

## WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

There are times in life when I feel everything I'm doing is right; like all my cards are set down and laid out in the right places. Everything is in motion. Then... bang! I hit a rough patch, I'm stumbling when I walk. I start to think, who can see this change in me? Who cares about my change?

Then I start to feel that the people I want to witness my change aren't there to see it. So I start to doubt myself and feel that all I am doing is for nothing. Why do I continue with this if the people I want to notice my change aren't there to see my growth? I know that this shouldn't matter to me and that I should change for myself and not for others. I know I shouldn't stop trying to do good if no one is there to encourage me to go on. None of that should matter, but to me it still does. Of course, I don't stop doing good because I know that these feelings are temporary. It's not something that is going to hold me back because I know that even if no one is there to witness my change, God is there. I need to be more persistent in reminding myself about that.

So in these times, and every day, I ask the Lord to give me strength and to allow my mind, body and soul to receive the peace it needs. I ask him to help me avoid any conflict throughout the day and to always be with me and my loved ones. Praying is what helps me get through my days, and what gives me the strength for those bitter and negative days. It's rough... but when I fall, I get back up stronger because of God's presence in my life.

- Roberto, who is in a California State Prison.

## PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord God,  
Lent is a time to examine our choices and grow in who we are. Help us to build the strength to resist temptation and grow into a deeper relationship with you and those we love during this Lenten Season.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

**REFLECTION:** I remember what has made it hard for me to resist temptation and make a good change in my life... I remember... I remember...

## OUR FATHER

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**R. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

## LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

## COMMUNION

## CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Merciful Father,  
Today we are reminded that none of us, not even your Son Jesus, is exempt from temptation. By resisting the devil's temptations to act as "the Son of God," Jesus fully embraced his human identity. Help us resist every day temptations that leads us to sin, and help us to carry out the mission of being who you created us to be. Be with us during this time of Lent.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



# LITURGY OF THE WORD

## First Reading: Deuteronomy 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.”

The Word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13

### R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
say to the LORD, “My refuge and fortress,  
my God in whom I trust.”

### R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

No evil shall befall you,  
nor shall affliction come near your tent,  
For to his angels he has given command about  
you,  
that they guard you in all your ways.

### R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

Upon their hands they shall bear you up,  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.  
You shall tread upon the asp and the viper;  
you shall trample down the lion and the  
dragon.

### R. Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

## Second Reading: Romans 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.”

The Word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

# MEDITATION: INTO THE DESERT WITH JESUS

this is the time  
of going with jesus  
to the desert

in the desert  
there is no noise  
no buildings  
no people  
i find a rock  
and sit on this rock  
i listen to the quiet  
of the desert silence  
i begin to feel  
uncomfortable  
i have to look inside  
i have to face things  
moving around in me  
that i have been  
running away from  
i feel uneasy  
i close my eyes  
there is a desire  
to run away  
from the stillness  
of the desert

at this moment  
i notice movement  
in the distance  
slowly someone  
begins to walk  
towards where  
i am sitting  
he comes closer

i recognize him  
as jesus  
he seems to be  
enjoying the beauty  
of the desert  
and the quiet  
he asks if he can  
sit next to me  
on the rock  
he asks me  
why i feel so panicky

i tell him that i am  
not used to looking at  
what is going on  
inside myself  
it is easier to run away

from all these things  
and just keep busy  
and keep  
the same routine

he looks at me  
and asks me  
what the hardest  
relationship in my life  
is right now

i tell him  
and he asks me  
how he can help me  
during these  
forty days of lent  
to improve  
this relationship  
with the person  
and if there is anything  
he can help me with

i tell him how difficult  
this person is  
jesus notices  
how i am moved  
when speaking to him  
about this person  
tears begin to  
warm my eyes  
i can tell jesus  
understands what  
i am saying  
and knows  
how difficult  
this relationship is

i ask jesus  
what i can do to  
improve this relationship

we then remain silent  
for some time  
enjoying the beauty  
of the desert  
watching the birds fly  
in the distance  
the deep colors  
of the cacti

then jesus asks me  
what i would like

to work on during  
these forty days  
besides this relationship  
he asks me  
how my family is doing  
i tell him who  
i'm having problems  
with in the family

then i tell him  
about my work  
and school  
the challenges  
the frustrations  
and he also seems  
to understand  
how difficult it is

i reach into my pockets  
and my wallet falls  
onto the sand  
and says to me  
we are in the desert  
you cannot buy  
anything with money  
jesus asks me  
how my relationship  
is to money and  
asks me with  
whom do i use  
the resources i have

then jesus asks me  
if i think it is very hard  
to change deep ways  
of darkness in the heart  
is it easy?

then he asks me  
if i would like to fast  
like he did during  
these forty days

i ask him  
what this means  
and he explains  
that it is hard  
to face the darkness  
that each one of us  
has inside  
and sometimes  
entering into

the discipline of fasting  
we find that  
we are able to  
break the chains  
that are keeping us  
bond to certain  
attachments  
in our relationships  
with people  
to money  
to alcohol  
or other addictions

i tell jesus  
i do want to change  
during these forty days  
and i want to tell him  
what my attachments  
are in my life  
and would like to do  
some penance and fast  
this is how he  
can help me  
with this part of my life  
this is what  
i need to work on

and then he asks me  
what positive things  
i would like to do  
during these days  
for someone else  
what service  
what act of compassion  
would i like to carry out

i tell him  
and he seems happy  
that i no longer  
feel uncomfortable  
being here in the desert  
in the stillness  
it is easier  
to be with  
what is going on  
inside

## Gospel: Luke 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

