

First Sunday of Lent - 09 March 2025

## Weekly Reflection

WEEK 1

*Slaves go free, the land rests,  
debts are cancelled.*

Pro-Cathedral of the Assumption

**Readings:** Deuteronomy 26:4-10; Romans 10:8-13; Luke 4:1-13 *"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."*

## SLAVES GO FREE, THE LAND RESTS, DEBTS ARE CANCELLED.

By Patricia Walsh Warren, Animator for Newfoundland and Labrador

Today's Gospel tells the story of the temptation of Jesus by Satan. Over 40 days of fasting, the Devil entices Jesus with offers of comfort, power and prestige. At each opportunity, Jesus responds with Scripture and reaffirms his commitment to God's will.

Temptations are opportunities for our spiritual growth; the more we overcome temptation, the more we grow in spiritual strength. Jesus used his faith and knowledge of Scripture to hold fast to his convictions and not fall prey to the temptations the Devil laid out in front of him.

We face temptations every day. We may feel the desire for a higher social status, prestige and recognition, satisfaction of the body or an appetite for power and financial wealth. Temptations lead to the desire for instant gratification. A lack of self control can cause us to fall even deeper to the things that tempt us. It can lead to overspending, excess consumption and often greed. When this happens, unfair and unjust social dynamics emerge. Excess consumption of food and goods, for example, can cause wasteful practices resulting in negative ecological impacts on the Earth that we all share and call home.

With all the news we hear every day, it would be tempting to ignore something like international debt. But we believe we cannot do that because Development and Peace — Caritas Canada has a mission to address the root causes of poverty, oppression and inequality by working with partners in the Global South and by mobilizing Canadians in the common struggle for justice and dignity. We also champion women and social movements as key agents of lasting change. We do this by working with our partners overseas to strengthen their work and develop community here at home in Canada, raising awareness and advocating for change. In a world where people in the Global South, especially women, are being affected by debt every day, we are called to work with our partners in this Jubilee year, resisting the temptation to ignore the struggles of our brothers and sisters.

As reflected in our name, we are the Canadian member of [Caritas Internationalis](#), a confederation of over 160 organizations in almost every country of the world. Inspired by Catholic faith, Caritas is the helping hand of the Church.

***This Lenten season, as part of the Jubilee year, we are joining Caritas Internationalis and our friends in Canada, like the ecumenical coalition KAIROS, to answer Pope Francis's call to [Turn Debt into Hope](#). We are urging decision-makers to prioritise people and planet over mere profit and demand debt justice for communities crushed by unjust and unpayable debts.***

2025 is a Jubilee year in the Church. A Jubilee year is a time of spiritual renewal and penance. As Susan Gunn, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, puts it in this year's [faith-based reflection](#), "The Jubilee idea in the Bible is perhaps the greatest model in human history of restorative justice. It is God's call to us, over and over again, to create structures of justice that will allow people to start anew." This is a time to stop the downward spiral that temptation can lead us into.

Pope Francis also turns to Scripture to speak to the faithful of the Church. In his papal bull, *Spes non confundit*, he tells that "the earth is the Lord's and all of us dwell in it as 'aliens and tenants' (Lev 25:23). If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry."

***Share your Lenten journey with Development and Peace — Caritas Canada and help us answer the call of Pope Francis. Be the helping hand of the Church.***



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