

English

1st Sunday of Lent B

**First Reading** Genesis 9:8-15

God spoke to Noah and his sons, "See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again." God said, "Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh."

**Second Reading** 1 Peter 3:18-22

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people "by water", and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

**Gospel** Mark 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. "The time has come" he said "and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News."

**Meditation**

The Sundays of Lent in this cycle rehearse the history of God's covenant-making with his people. On this first Sunday we hear of the covenant of God with Noah, the new creation begun after the great destruction of the flood. God will not be defeated by human weakness and failure.

Although his children fall, he returns to establish his bond with them. Jesus comes from the waters of the Jordan to seal once and for all in his blood the covenant of God with his people. In order to build the bridge between humanity and God, he became like us in all things except sin, tempted in every way as we are. Thus made one with us, he leads us back through the waters of death to new creation in his life. We then are witnesses to the new covenant, "the plan God was pleased to decree in Christ to bring all things in the heavens and on earth into one under Christ's headship" (Ep 1:10).