



Towards Plenary Council 2020-2021
First Sunday of Lent 2019

... led by the Spirit into the desert ...

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

From the Readings

Second Reading: Romans 10:8. "The word (that is the faith we proclaim) is very near to you; it is on your lips and in your heart."

Psalm 90/91:2. My refuge, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust

Gospel: Luke 4:1-2. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for forty days being put to the test by the devil. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry.

Reflections

In the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for living; thus in today's world there are innumerable signs ... of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life.

Pope Francis, *'The Joy of the Gospel'* 86

Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.

Pope John XXIII (Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli), *Journal of a Soul*, 1954



THE MAN OF SORROWS 1860 - WILLIAM DYCE

We Believe

that what we see before us is never all that is possible,
that beyond our present is a future which could be new
with more than enough for all,
and compassion greater than our own.

We believe in a God
who comes to fearful people
across the waters of life which threaten to swamp us
and whose company is love
beyond our understanding.

We believe in a greater power for good
than anything within each of us and all of us,
which stands between us
and at the centre of the universe
in ways of mystery and grace. Amen.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon, *In This Hour: Liturgies for Pausing*, 86-87

For Thinking and Talking

- 1. From these readings and reflections**, what words, phrases and insights stand out for you?
- 2. Imagine** Jesus, with you, your family or community, looking towards the future. What new possibilities are there? What signs encourage trust and hope?
- 3. Remember** a 'desert time' in life, for you, your family or community. What happened? How did you get through? How did you find a way to go?
- 4. Express** a hope or intention for the future.

Prayer

Lord

reach out and take hold of us
before our second thoughts
have us balk again.

Focus us now
as we dare to let go a little
of our control
and open up in trust to You.

Focus all our energies
so that all of scattered us
may come together as one
in this open moment of praying our Yes to You.
Yes to who You are inviting us to be in You. Amen.

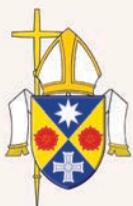
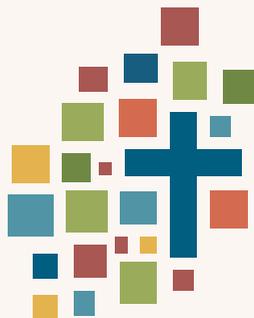
Noel Davis, 'Praying Yes to You' in *Campfire of the Heart*, 35

For Plenary Council 2020-2021

Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost.

Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land.
O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia.
Lead your Church into a hope-filled future,
that we may live the joy of the Gospel,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
bread for the journey from age to age. Amen.

(From the Plenary Council 2020 Prayer)



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

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Acknowledgements: Pope Francis, *'The Joy of the Gospel'* 86; Pope John XXIII (Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli), *Journal of a Soul*, 1954; Dorothy McRae-McMahon, *In This Hour: Liturgies for Pausing*, Thornbury:Desbooks, 2001; Noel Davis, *Campfire of the Heart*, Thornleigh: Shekinah Ministry, 1994.