

Opening Sentences:

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

The Lord's unfailing love and mercy never cease,
fresh as the morning and sure as the sunrise.

Psalm 91:9-12, Common English Bible

Because you've made the Lord my refuge,
the Most High, your place of residence—
no evil will happen to you;
no disease will come close to your tent.

Because he will order his messengers to help you,
to protect you wherever you go.

They will carry you with their own hands
so you don't bruise your foot on a stone.

Matthew 4:1-17

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

- The temptation comes immediately following Jesus' baptism when God calls him beloved. Where do you see a connection between the baptism and Jesus' facing the tests to come?
- What wilderness tests have you faced?
- How has God been present for you in those wilderness times?

Prayers for Others and Ourselves:

Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new. Especially we thank you for

the beauty of your creation . . .(name examples)

the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness . . .(name examples)

the sustaining love of family and friends . . .(name examples)

the fellowship of faith in your church. . . .(name examples)

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord. Especially we pray for

those who govern. . . .(name examples)

all who are hurting(name examples)

all who need your loving care(name examples)

Thank you for welcoming all of our prayers, including every time we pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Blessing

The grace of God be with us all, now and always.

Amen.

Bless the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised.