

# LORDSBRIDGE TEAM OF CHURCHES



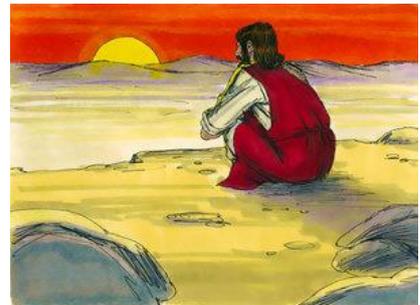
**First Sunday of Lent – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

**Read Mark 1.9-15**

***You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.***

Isn't it wonderful when someone praises you for something that you have done? Or pays you a compliment about the way you look or about something you have created? Comments like this boost our confidence and help us to feel good about ourselves. We all need to feel loved and appreciated. Is there something that you have done recently that you are proud of? Talk about it with someone in your family – they will be pleased to hear about it.

The Bible reading today from St Mark's gospel tells the story of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist and the story of Jesus in the wilderness. Mark puts these two incidents together so that we read them and think about them together. He wants us to realise that they are related. When Jesus is baptised he hears the voice of God saying "This is my son, the Beloved". Knowing that God loves him helps Jesus to cope with the difficult time that he has in the wilderness. Forty days is a long time to be on your own without other people to support you.



We are all facing a difficult time at the moment because we are in lockdown. For some people it is like Jesus in the wilderness – they are living on their own and are not meeting other people. Do you know someone who is living on their own and is feeling lonely at the moment? Could you help them by phoning them and saying something cheerful to them? They would be pleased to know that someone cared about them.

We are now in the season of Lent. It is a time to think about our lives and our faith in God. Some people give up things in Lent, like eating chocolate, other people take something up, like helping a neighbour each day or reading a verse of the Bible each day. Is there something that you could do each day to help you draw closer to God? There are lots of ideas on the Lordsbridge website – have a look at the Together@Lent poster.

## **Activity**

- Write out the word Beloved, with each letter on a new line and write a word next to each letter that describes something good about yourself, starting with that letter. This is called an acrostic.  
Use it in your prayers this week to thank God for all the blessings in your life.

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## **Prayer**

Dear God, we pray for those who don't like themselves very much;  
may they hear you say "You are my beloved, I am pleased with you."

We pray for those who feel that they don't belong anywhere  
may they hear you say "You are my beloved, I am pleased with you."

**We pray for ourselves, that in our sad moments**

we may hear you say "You are my beloved, I am pleased with you." **Amen.**