



## LENT SERMON- PLANNING GUIDE

RCL GOSPEL SCRIPTURES FOR YEAR C  
GUIDE DEVELOPED BY LISLE GWYNN GARRITY

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Like biblical commentary, this guide seeks to offer you seeds of ideas, theme connections, questions for deeper study, and real-world intersections. For each text, we've included suggestions for how to connect the scripture to the theme, *Cultivating & Letting Go*. These suggestions—a non-exhaustive list—offer a few ways of approaching and thinking about the texts in light of our theme.

We encourage you to use this guide as a starting point for your text study each week. You may wish to include our artist statements (included with the visuals in our *Cultivating & Letting Go* bundle) in your scripture research and reflections. Consider mapping out your ideas in our accompanying sermon-planning grid.

#### Possibilities for Developing a Sermon Series:

- For each week, develop your own “Cultivating \_\_\_\_\_ & Letting Go of \_\_\_\_\_” statements. You can interpret these statements as either what God is cultivating in you, and/or what you are cultivating and letting go of this Lent.
- For the first three weeks of Lent, you could focus on cultivating, then, in the last 3 weeks, focus on letting go—or vice versa. Or you could alternate Sundays with letting go and cultivating themes.
- You may wish to refer to Brené Brown’s “Guideposts for Wholehearted Living” that she outlines in her book, *The Gifts of Imperfection*. You could preach on a different guidepost each week.
- For each week’s “letting go” statement, you could focus on a particular fear (ex. Letting go of. . . the fear of failure, the fear of abandonment, the fear of losing control, etc.).

# 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

**TEXT** Luke 4:1-13

## THEME CONNECTIONS

**Cultivating:** faithfulness, devotion, loyalty, resistance, God's will (vs. our own)

**Letting Go of:** distraction, temptation, personal profit & power, the fear of losing control

## GUIDING Q'S:

- Jesus recalls Moses & the Israelites in his responses to the devil (Deut. 8:3, 6:13, 10:20, 6:16). What are the symbolic connections between Jesus' time in the wilderness and the Israelites' journey in the wilderness?
- What does Jesus resist?
  - The temptation to provide only for himself instead of living into God's abundant manna.
  - The temptation to obtain unlimited power and control.
  - The temptation to coerce faith or prove God's power.
  - How do these temptations surface in your own life?
- How does Jesus cultivate faithfulness in this passage? How does Jesus let go of gaining power and control? What else does Jesus cultivate and let go of in this story?
- What are we likely to abandon when we are tempted with gaining power?
- Jesus essentially endures a season of Lent in his 40 days in the wilderness. How does this time prepare him for his ministry? How might we, too, be shaped & emboldened in this Lenten season?

## QUOTES & RESOURCES FOR INSPIRATION:

"Identity. It's always God's first move. Before we do anything wrong and before we do anything right, God has named and claimed us as God's own. But almost immediately, other things try to tell us who we are and to whom we belong: capitalism, the weight-loss industrial complex, our parents, kids at school—they all have a go at telling us who we are. But only God can do that. Everything else is temptation. Maybe demons are defined as anything other than God that tries to tell us who we are."

—Nadia Bolz-Weber, *Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint*. Jericho Books. 2013.

Read [this article](https://www.patheos.com/blogs/kaitlinbcurtice/2017/05/08/jesus-us-a-shared-wilderness/) for an indigenous perspective on this story. "Jesus & Us: A Shared Wilderness," by Kaitlin Curtice. Patheos. May 8, 2017. <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/kaitlinbcurtice/2017/05/08/jesus-us-a-shared-wilderness/>