

The First Sunday in Lent

—Scripture—

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11, Psalm 91:1-2 & 9-16,
Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13

Reader: Our inheritance is a place called Bounty.

People: We are promised a land flowing with milk and honey,
filled with good things.

Reader: Would we like to go?

People: Of course, let's get started.

Reader: But the way there leads through the desert,
a dangerous and desolate place.

People: Are you sure? Isn't there another way?

Reader: There is another way, but that way leads to death.
The way through the desert will lead to life.

People: Then we choose life.

Reader: In the wilderness, we won't be alone.
In the wilderness, we will have enough for the journey.

People: May God give us strength for the journey that lies ahead.

Reader: Let us pray.

People: God of abundance, we thank you for a place called Bounty.
Keep us from despair as we travel.

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The Second Sunday in Lent

—Scripture—

Genesis 15:1-12 & 17-18, Psalm 27,
Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 13:31-35

Reader: Our inheritance is a place called Bounty.

People: We are promised a land where our hope will be fulfilled
and our children will have a future.

Reader: But the way is blocked by powers which won't let us by.
There are those who want to destroy us before we get there.

People: Like Jesus, there may be a bounty on *our* heads.

Reader: Whom will we trust as we travel:
the "fox" named Herod or the "chicken" named Jesus?

People: Too often we bet on the fox, because we don't trust
the chicken to protect us.

Reader: Jesus said that he would protect his children
like a hen gathers her brood.

People: Yet when we stick with the fox, the hen is doomed.

Reader: In order for us to get to the place called Bounty,
there is a price that needs to be paid.

People: But that's what it will take to give our children a future.

Reader: Let us pray.

People: God of abundance, keep us from despair as we travel.
Give us the courage to stand with the oppressed of your
world and not the oppressors.

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The Third Sunday in Lent

—Scripture—

Isaiah 55:1-9, Psalm 63:1-8,
1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Luke 13:1-9

Reader: Our inheritance is a place called Bounty.

People: God is inviting everyone to a land of plenty,
where all can enjoy life fully.

Reader: But we are pursuing what doesn't satisfy,
we have come to a place where there is too much for some,
and too little for most.

People: God must grow weary of seeing us waste energy
and still not getting to the right place.

Reader: How long will God keep putting gas in our tank
when we are going the wrong way?

People: If we let more people on the bus, the way
to Bounty might become clear.

Reader: Are you prepared to share your seat with someone
who may be suffering from hunger, homelessness,
violence or AIDS?

People: We are all God's children. We are all made in God's image.

Reader: Let us pray.

People: God of abundance, keep us from despair as we travel.
Give us the courage to include the oppressed and
overcome the oppressors.

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The Fourth Sunday in Lent

—Scripture—

Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 32,
2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Reader: Our inheritance is a place called Bounty.

People: We are promised a land of feasting and celebrating.

Reader: Will we have to wait until the end of the journey to enjoy it?

People: No, God begins to fulfill the promises now.
Let us pause for a moment to enjoy the party God is hosting.

Reader: Who do we find there?

People: We're a bit surprised by the guest list. God has invited not
only the responsible, but also the irresponsible, not only
our friends, but also our enemies.

Reader: Let's go on in. The door is open.

People: We're not sure we want to. We've worked hard to get here.
Some of the others got here for free.

Reader: God has never denied us anything. So what's our problem?

People: We may have to think about this. God's grace is more
outrageous than we thought.

Reader: Let us pray.

People: God of abundance, keep us from despair as we travel.
Give us the courage to reconsider who are the oppressed
and who are the oppressors.

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The Fifth Sunday in Lent

—Scripture—

Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126,
Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

Reader: Our inheritance is a place called Bounty.

People: We are promised a land where the past is forgotten
and everything is made new.

Reader: Will we ever get there?

People: We will have to use everything we have.

Reader: How will we use it?

People: We will spend it on those who need it the most,
not only on the living, but even on the dying.

Reader: Why would we waste it on people who have AIDS,
who are lost causes? The poor will always be with us.

People: Because God has wasted everything on us,
now we have to waste on others.
We see God especially in the suffering.

Reader: Let us pray.

People: God of abundance, keep us from despair as we travel.
Give us the courage to see you in both the oppressed
and the oppressors.

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Palm/Passion Sunday

—Scripture—

Luke 19:28-40

Reader: This looks like a place called Bounty.

People: There are crowds of happy people, music and laughter.
They are welcoming a new king.

Reader: How do we greet him?

People: “Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.”

Reader: What will he do for us?

People: The King will take over the throne, and put food on every
table and a car in every garage. He will clean up the
land of Bounty and throw out all our enemies.

Reader: Just a minute. This King turns the other cheek, walks the
second mile, gives away his clothes, loves those we hate.

People: Then we don’t want him. We want a different kind of King.
Let’s kill him and throw him out of Bounty.

Reader: Maybe this isn’t Bounty after all. Maybe we’ll have to
wait to find it. Let us pray.

People: God of mercy, help our confusion on this day of paradox.
Give us the courage to find ourselves not only in the Palm
Sunday crowd but also in the one on Good Friday.

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Easter Sunday

—Scripture—
Isaiah 65, Acts 10

Reader: Welcome to a place called Bounty.
Here everything has been made new.

People: The sick are healed, the neglected are included,
the poor have enough.

Reader: Here we say no to death and yes to life.

People: This is the place we have longed for,
the place where God delights.

Reader: In Bounty, there are no distinctions.

People: Here God joins outsider and insider, the just and the unjust,
the good and the bad.

Reader: Christ is risen.

People: He is risen indeed!

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