A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 1:12–15: The Temptation of Jesus

At once the Spirit drove [Jesus] out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him. After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Angels Ministering to Christ in the Wilderness, by Thomas Cole
1. Where did Jesus go? For how long was He there? What happened to Him there?

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2. What happened before Jesus came to Galilee?

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3. What did Jesus proclaim in Galilee?

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Christ in the Desert
BY IVAN KRAMSKOI (1872)

Oil on canvas. Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Note to Teacher: Lead your students in a discussion about the painting Christ in the Desert by Ivan Kramskoi. Use the discussion questions below to help guide your conversation. Feel free to allow the conversation to go in unexpected places and add or substitute your own questions for discussion.


2. Does this painting make you feel happy or sad? Why? Accept reasoned answers.

3. What is happening in this painting? Jesus is praying alone in the desert.

4. What do you think Jesus might be praying for? Accept reasoned answers.

5. Is there someplace that you like to go to be alone? Where is it? What do you like about it? Accept reasoned answers.

6. What is something that you can pray to God for? Accept reasoned answers. Offer possible suggestions such as for your parents and siblings, to do well on a test, for someone who is sick, for the poor or hungry, for yourself if you’re feeling sad, to tell God thank you for something good in your life, and so forth. Help your students recognize that there are a lot of different reasons we can pray to God.

7. How can Jesus be an example of prayer for us? Jesus took time away from everything to pray to His Father. He prayed alone and in silence. Jesus often gave thanks to God, and He also prayed to God for other people. Accept other reasoned answers.

8. The artist of this painting painted his own version of Jesus praying and fasting in the desert for forty days. If you could paint your own version, or add to this one, what would you paint differently? Why? Accept reasoned answers.
HANDOUT B

Christ in the Desert Coloring Page

What is one thing you want to pray to Jesus for during Lent?

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