



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

The Right Reverend Samuel Rose, B.A, M.Div (Hon)
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

CHURCH HOUSE
22 Church Hill
St. John's, NL A1C 3Z9
Telephone: (709) 576-6697
Fax: (709) 576-7122
Email: bishop@anglicanenl.net

Bishop's Lenten Letter 2026

"Then Jesus was led out into the wilderness by the spirit to be tested by the devil. 2 He fasted forty days and forty nights, and at the end of it was famished. Then the tempter approached him." (Matthew 4:1-3, translation by N.T. Wright)

+++

My dear beloved family in Christ,

As we enter this holy season of Lent, I invite you on a journey toward the Cross of Christ and the Empty Tomb - a time of renewal and preparation for the joy of Easter. Rooted in the ancient practice of preparing new believers for baptism, Lent calls all of us to deepen our faith through prayer, penitence, fasting, self-denial, and acts of generosity.

Like any meaningful journey, Lent begins with intention. Perhaps you'll set aside moments for quiet prayer, select a devotional to guide your reflections, curb unhelpful habits, or commit extra time and resources to our shared ministry. There are countless paths to walk this season, and I encourage you to choose one that draws you closer to God and one another.

But why embark on this journey? In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with God and Creation without fear or shame. Yet, tempted by the serpent, they became fixated on what was forbidden. This damaged their trust in God and marred their identity as God's beloved children. This "original sin" still echoes in our lives, where temptations lure us to doubt our worth and chase false illusions of fulfillment.

In contrast, in the Gospels, Jesus is affirmed as God's beloved Son at His baptism. Yet, he also faces the same tempter in the wilderness. "If you are the Son of God," the devil challenges, urging Him to misuse power for self-gain, test God's protection, or worship false idols. Jesus resists these temptations, rooted in faithful obedience. Jesus depends on God for everything, refusing the devil's temptations towards sin. Through this, He reclaims and models our true identity as God's children.

This, dear friends, is the heart of Lent: reclaiming our baptismal identity. The world bombards us with messages that we are inadequate, tempting us to seek our worth in possessions or appearances. But these are deceptions. In baptism, God marks us as worthy, loved, and treasured. You are priceless beyond measure. Jesus' death on the Cross doesn't earn God's love; it reveals that love already given freely.

I invite you this Lent to hold fast to this truth. Let us discipline our lives to turn away temptation, saying with Jesus, “Away with you, Satan! Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.” Through prayer and reflection, may we rediscover our dignity as God’s beloved, supporting one another in acts of compassion and service.

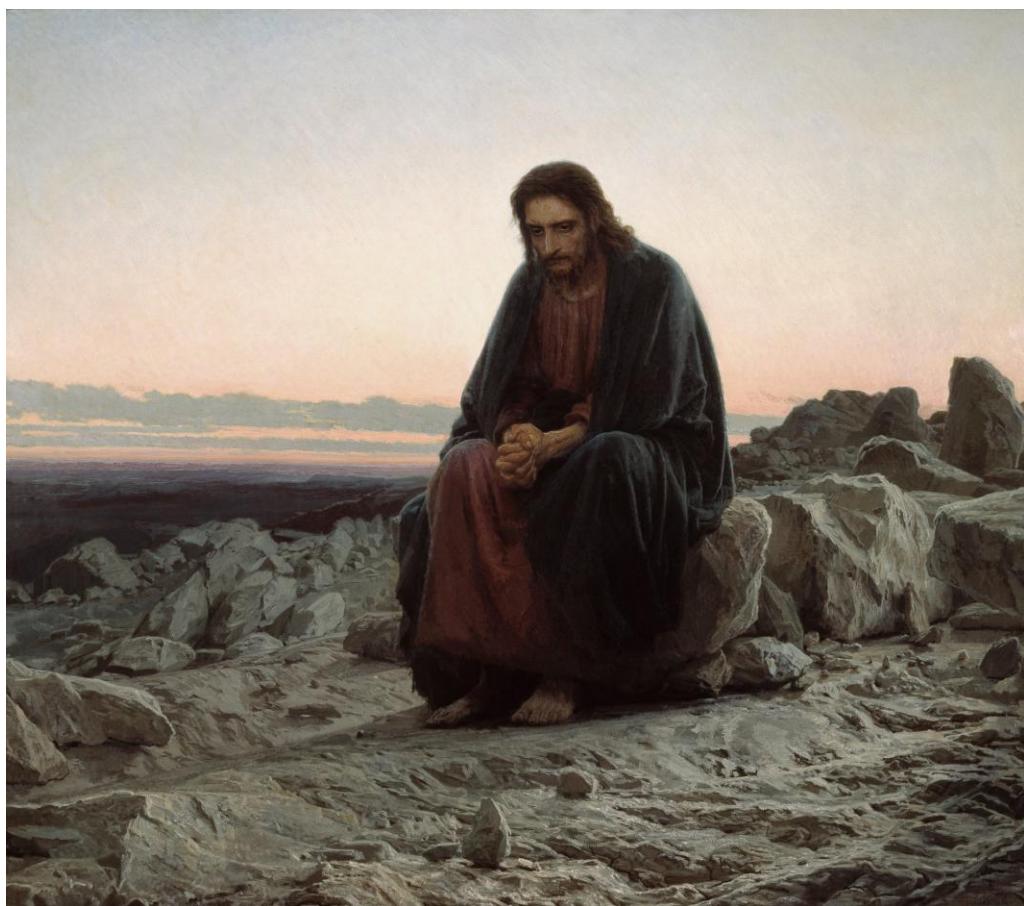
I pray this season strengthens our Diocese in faith and unity. May the Holy Spirit guide your steps, leading us all to the resurrection hope of Easter.

In Christ’s love,

+ Samuel : Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador

The Rt. Rev. Samuel Rose
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

+++



Christ in the Desert, or Christ in the Wilderness (1872), a painting by Russian artist Ivan Kramskoi, depicting the temptation of Christ.