

## *suddenly angels came*

First Sunday in Lent - February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

Gospel reading: Matthew 4:1-11



### Poetry

#### the tempter

she wears no slippery snakeskin,  
held in her grasp, no apple,  
and in his grip, no pitchfork,  
no burnished flesh enfolds him      still

she slides among creation  
and he calls us to high places  
she bids us taste true knowledge  
and he promises pure power      yet

we do not always know them  
'till they trade our souls for nothing  
and they leave us stripped and broken  
in the wilderness of wanting      in

the trial and the confusion  
when we look into the mirror  
they are smiling right back at us  
wearing nothing but our face      then

the one who never left us  
brings us back to the beginning  
and restores our ruptured Eden  
with their selfless love and grace

Jennie Gordon from *Dad and Daughter*, © 2012

### Questions to ponder/discuss:

What does the image evoke within you? What words, phrases or questions arise for you in the poetry? What choices have you made in your life of faith? Who are the angels who minister to you in the wild times? Have you been led to minister to others?

### Prayer

Artist of souls, you sculpted a people for yourself  
out of the rocks of wilderness and fasting.  
Help us as we take up your invitation  
to prayer and simplicity,  
that the discipline of these forty days  
may sharpen our hunger  
for the feast of your holy friendship,  
and whet our thirst for the living water  
you offer through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Image : artist - Cerezo Barredo <https://www.servicioskoinonia.org/cerezo/dibujosC/17cuaresmaC1.jpg>

Prayer: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/prayer/?y=17134&season=lent&d=lent2>

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