

SAINT NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL

<p><i>Fast</i></p>  <p><i>Give</i></p> 			
<p><i>Prepare</i></p>  <p><i>Pray</i></p> 			

LENT

O Jesus through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer thee all my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy divine heart and particularly for the intentions of Our Holy Father, the Pope

The Stations of the Cross is an ancient devotion in the Catholic Church. Most Catholic church buildings feature images of the story of the suffering and death of Jesus, usually found on the walls surrounding the sanctuary. Stations are often prayed by groups



of people in Lent on Friday afternoons or evenings. A brief history of the Stations of the Cross can be found at:

http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/stations_of_the_cross

And here's a link to a contemporary rendering of the Stations:

<http://www.strichardschichester.co.uk/strichards/oconnollart.shtml>

We have posted a video on the school website offering staff an opportunity to pray the Stations of the Cross with your class, or at home. It's only 6 minutes long but of course one could pause the video at each station and pray for a longer time.

Word for the Weekend

The first scripture this Sunday finds God offering Noah and his family the beauty of the rainbow (a sort of glorious pathway which binds earth closely to heaven) as a sign of the covenant between God and Noah and his de-

scendants.

The reading from 1 Peter echoes the baptismal imagery found in the story of Noah's ark - Noah's emergence to new life from the waters of the Flood (amid devastation and de-



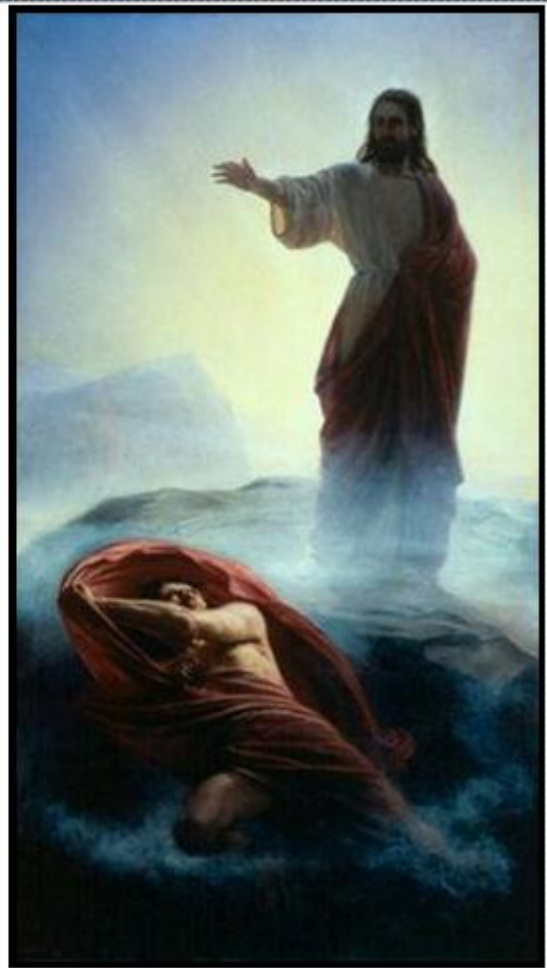
struction) is compared to, and becomes a symbol of, emergence to new life from the waters of baptism. The waters of baptism are a symbol not only of washing away sin, but more importantly of new life in Christ. To 'baptise' means to 'dip' in water. By baptism we are 'dipped' into Christ's death. We emerge from the water soaked through with the risen life of Christ, so that henceforth Christ is our life. This reading encourages us to prepare for the renewal of life at Easter by getting our conscience in good order.

The gospel for the First Sunday of Lent in all three years of the Lectionary



offers the story of Christ's temptation in the desert. This year's version (Mark) is short and scant on detail but tells the story nonetheless. Mark's emphasis is distinctly different from that of Matthew and Luke. No details of the testing are given. Rather Jesus' sojourn in the desert seems almost a return to the peace of the Garden of Eden. The desert of Judea,

between Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley, is a noble and dignified solitude of smooth, sandstone hills. Nothing grows, of course, but wild camels and the occasional leopard prowl around. There Jesus was 'with the wild animals' as, led by the Spirit, he made his preparation for his mission. In what way was he tested? We may presume that in solitude and prayer he was working out the implications of the Voice from Heaven at his Baptism.



- **How was he to run his course as the beloved Servant of the Lord?**
- **Precisely how was he to bring the presence of the Kingship of God into people's lives?**

The 'forty' is often used in biblical accounts for a period of preparation, as Israel's forty years in the desert, or the forty days between Easter and Ascension which prepared the Apostles for Jesus' leaving them and then for the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

We may use our forty days of Lent to reflect on how we may bring God's presence to bear in and through our lives.

- **How will you make best use of this time of preparation in Lent?**