

Impulse for the lent

Gospel on the first Sunday of Lent: Luke 4:1-13

At that time Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan. He was led by the Spirit in the desert for forty days and was tempted by the devil.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Christian Lent, the time of preparation for the highest feast of the Catholic Church. Pope Francis has given the year 2025 the motto 'Pilgrims of Hope', and this is also the motto for Lent in our Catholic parish of St Anthony.

But what does Lent have to do with the motto 'Pilgrims of Hope'?

The Gospel of the first Sunday of Lent tells how Jesus wanders through the desert, guided by the Holy Spirit. It also describes how he is tempted by the devil and how he reacts to it. Jesus is not swayed and resists all attempts to dissuade him from his path.

We know the paths we take in the literal sense, but we also know them in the figurative sense, such as the path through our lives and also the path through this Lent.

When I make good resolutions, for example for Lent, I can resolve not to be dissuaded and take Jesus as an example. I may not always succeed, but every day I have a new chance to 'do better'.

These can be very different goals:

I can resolve to fast in the literal sense of the word; I can also set myself the goal of making time for friends, acquaintances and encounters with strangers. I can also take a look at myself and consider what is really good for me and then put this into practice.

In earlier times, the church was mainly concerned with not eating meat, with living abstinely.

Nowadays, we can extend the concept of fasting much further and describe it as '**living consciously - perceiving consciously - consciously doing good to others and to myself**'.

I wish you a good start to Lent 2025.

Barbara Scheck

(Pastoral counsellor and hospital chaplain)