first sunday of lent 2023

At first glance the temptations set before us seem **discouraging**: Life is a battle that won't end until we **die**; there's no escape from the struggle...

But Original Sin is only the **beginning** of the story.

* God did not **abandon** us. He could have. He had every right too. But he did not. He **searched out** Adam and Eve when they were hiding in the garden, and he searches for **us**.
* He sent us a Savior. Jesus Christ.

Unlike the **first** Adam, Christ, the **new** Adam, **never disobeyed** God the Father; he never let his trust in the Father die.

* From the dire **temptations in the desert** up to **death on a cross,** he stayed **faithful**.
* He **defeated**the devil, repairing the rift torn open by original sin.
* And **Mary**, the **new Eve**, was there with him, **full of grace**, **faithful** at the foot of the cross.

True, our lives will always be a **struggle** against both our own sinful **tendencies** and the power of sin active in the **world** around us.

But it is **in that very struggle** that our lives take on **transcendent meaning** - we become soldiers of Christ's Kingdom.

Because God has revealed the truth about the origin of evil and the way of Redemption, we never have to be **surprised** either by our own weakness or by the injustice and suffering we encounter in the world.

We know the story! We know what is going on! We understand the battle that is laid before us as the enemy seeks to capture our soul to thwart God’s plans for us.

Today, when Jesus comes to **strengthen** us for the battle by giving us his **own** strength in Holy Communion, let's **renew our faith** in this story, and let's **renew our commitment** to follow in **Christ's** footsteps, not in Adam and Eve's.