

BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Mark 1:9-15

Lent begins in the _____

With the _____ pieces

To make _____

To make _____

READ. REFLECT. RESPOND. REMEMBER.

The story of the Bible begins in Genesis 1. It is a story of creation, beauty and wholeness. A way that it is meant to be. Though separation from God comes along in Genesis 3, it was never God's point to be separated. It was never the point to let sin rule. And so the story of the Bible continues into Jesus of Nazareth, the son of God and how his sacrifice makes a new, new creation in us. Many people have wrestled with this. Why is there still sin in this new creation? What is our response to it? Sometimes, in particular, we seem to focus on the *wrongness* of the sinful realities instead of the *rightness* of the new creation, of the new beauty and the new wholeness that is ours in Jesus. Read James 1:12-18. James covers sin, but also creation – the firstfruits of the new creation in Christ.

Reflect:

If Luther was right and we are, at the same time, sinner and saint – do you perceive that the Church spends more time on one or the other? Why do you think that is?

Where have you seen evil desire at work in you?

Where do you see every good and perfect gift coming to you?

Birth is a metaphor that James uses for both of these, why do you think that is?

Respond:

Jesus is the firstfruits of the new creation, and so are you.

Remember:

“He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.” James 1:18