

July 8, 2018

Unsettled Wilderness Voices

First Reading ~ Mark 1:12-13

Immediately the Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness, and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

Second Reading ~ *adapted from Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber*

Suicide is an epidemic in this country. As is death by accidental overdose of painkillers. I don't know many people who haven't been affected by it. And as I thought about the accusing voice, I couldn't help but think of what that voice says to those who are so low, and when they die, what the accusing voice then says to those who remain behind. Because I know that voice. It's the one that makes us think that we could have kept that friend or loved one alive if only we'd returned their last voice mail or said the right thing or showed up at the right time. And yet it doesn't really work like that.

Yes, I am familiar with that accusing voice. The one that tells me that I am what I've done. The voice that accuses me of already forgiven sins. The one that repeats harmful things said to me as a child. For some of us, those voices don't ever really shut the hell up. That voice makes us eat less than we should or more than we should. Sometimes we try and shut that voice up with alcohol or dope. That voice can make us spend more hours at work than we should. That voice makes us go to ridiculous lengths to try and prove it wrong. Or try to prove it right.

But that accusing voice is not God's voice.
It is not God's voice.