

Cycle C 1st Sunday of Lent
Sunday March 10th, 2019

On this first Sunday of Lent, St. Luke describes for us in detail; Jesus 40 days in the desert. We see that the devil brazenly interferes in the very life of our Lord..... Jesus Christ the Son of God, in **submitting** to temptations, allowed the evil one to seem to have his way. This interface of Jesus with the devil gives us much hope since He who is True God and True Man **“Made Himself like us in everything except sin.”** St. John Vianney had this to say about Jesus voluntarily undergoing temptation. “How fortunate we are, how lucky we are to have a God as a model. Are we poor? We have a God who is born in a stable, who lies in a manger. Are we despised? We have a God who led the way, who was crowned with thorns, dressed in a filthy cloak and treated as a madman. Are we tormented by pain and suffering? Before our eyes we have a God covered with wounds dying in unimaginable pain. Are we being persecuted? How can we dare to complain when we have a God who is being put to death by executioners? Finally, are we being tempted by the demon?

We have our lovable Redeemer.... He also was tempted by the demon and was twice taken up by that hellish spirit. Therefore, no matter what sufferings, pains or temptations we are experiencing, we always have, everywhere, our God leading the way for us, and assuring us of victory; as long as we genuinely desire it.”

Yes, we can have confidence in overcoming temptation, **“Because He Himself was tested through what He suffered, He is able to help those who are being tested.”**

St. Thomas Aquinas had this to say about the temptations that the devil tried to use against the Son of God. “Scripture would not have said that once **all** the temptation ended the devil **departed from Him**; unless the matter of **all sins** were included in the three temptations already related. For the causes of desires – namely, lust of the flesh; desire for glory; eagerness for power.” We too are confronted with the same temptations. Lust of the flesh includes: excessive food, drink, misuse of sexuality, from immodest dress to contraception, to defiling the body with so called body art. The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, so we are to **glorify God in our bodies.**

In our time we see the desire for glory playing out on social media. “How many **likes** do I get on what I post?” Oftentimes in that quest for social media glory we miss the truth and are guilty of spreading lies and gossip. The eagerness for power corrupts as we see politicians destroying the sanctity of human especially through abortion so that they can advance their quest for power under the guise of reproductive rights and so called healthcare for women. Sadly we have also seen the abuse of power in the Church with sexual abuse and cover-up of sexual abuse from cardinals, to bishops and priests. This false power is called clericalism.

We find in the devil today his sorry attempt to use the Scriptures against our Lord Jesus Christ. We know Jesus is the Word. Therefore, the devil cannot use the Scriptures against Jesus. This is also an instruction to us that we understand and teach the Scriptures in union with the Church, not our own personal interpretation.

When the devil tried to tempt Jesus to turn stones into bread Jesus quoted Deuteronomy, **“One does not live on bread alone.”** Jesus did not need to perform a miracle since He had complete trust in the Father. Thus, the Father would provide what is needed for Jesus, and for us too!

Furthermore, Jesus true hunger is for our eternal salvation.

Next the devil tried to use a passage from Jerimiah to convince Jesus that he would give to Him all the kingdoms, power and glory, if He would worship him. Jesus answered with Deuteronomy, **“You shall worship the Lord your God and Him alone shall you serve.”** We have news for satan, all the kingdoms, power and glory already belonged to Jesus which is confirmed in the book of Revelation. **“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor and glory and praise.”** Jesus Himself confirms this after His resurrection with the words, **“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”** Only the Father is the one who can give kingdoms, power and glory, and it all belongs to Jesus Christ.

The devil even tried to tempt Jesus to jump off the high point of the temple using Psalm 91. Jesus responded decisively quoting Deuteronomy saying, **“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”**

This is a stark reminder, that we do not test God. God tests us!

To sum all of this up today remember that; Jesus Christ the Son of God, in **submitting** to temptations, allowed the evil one to seem to have his way.

As we know the devil ultimately lost. We too are going to be tempted by the devil. We are not Jesus Christ we are mere mortals we are completely dependent on Jesus Christ and His Church. We do not want to be caught up in the tricks of the devil. So, surrender to Jesus Christ and remain closely connected to His Church.