

REFLECTION

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"Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil..." - Luke 4:1-13



In each of the Church's Liturgical Seasons we have an opportunity to examine ourselves and reflect on different aspects of Jesus's life. During Lent we create a space to reflect on His suffering and sacrifices.

In today's Gospel reading the Spirit led Jesus into the desert. For forty days Jesus lived in the wilderness, and faced the devil's temptations. He was tempted with pride, power, and popularity; however, Jesus knew that He was called to follow God's will and resist the empty promises the devil offered.

I find comfort that the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the trial. The forty days were meant to prepare Jesus for the work that was to come, and a part of that preparation included temptations. Jesus relied on His knowledge of the scriptures and combatted the temptations with Truth. Turning a stone into bread seems like an innocent action, but Jesus knew that the temporary satisfaction would be empty and in defiance of God's will. Jesus understands what it means to face temptation, and in His resistance provides a model of following God's will that we should all ascribe to. Jesus was tested, and responded without sin. When I find myself facing a trial, I can draw comfort in the knowledge that the same Holy Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness is in me.

In His resistance in the wilderness, we have a foretaste of Jesus's victory to come. At Easter we celebrate Jesus's victory over death; in the meantime Lent provides us with a time to fast and prepare our hearts for the inevitable temptations of the world. Lent provides us with the opportunity to spend forty days in our own "wilderness", fortifying our own hearts through sacrifice and prayer.

Focus: COMMUNITY

Throughout Lent we focus on all that Jesus has done for us. In today's Gospel we see that Jesus resisted each temptation, not just for Himself, but for us. Each of the temptations the devil proposed were designed to distract Jesus from His humanity.

Each temptation involved Jesus using His divinity for personal gain and separating Himself from the human community.

The temptation of individualism is something that we are all called to resist. The Lord created us as social beings with a responsibility to care for one another.

PRAYER

Lord, you created us to love and worship. Help me cling to the truth that I am Yours in the midst of trials. When I walk through the valleys help me remember the joys from the mountain tops, and place my hope in the knowledge that Your will is for my good.

Stir in me a heart that longs to discern Your will. Help me to work Your justice rather than personal gain every day of my life. Bless our bodies for Your service, and our service for Your Glory.

WHO INSPIRES YOU TO SERVE?

My Mom has always been a model of service I aspire to follow. She embodies the principle of placing others first, stressing to me and my siblings that "where your treasure is your heart will also be." Mom's treasure is rooted in the love she has for our community, and it is important to her that she actively invests her time to show the love. It could be as simple as caring for our school garden, or as involved as organizing our Church's homeless outreach ministry.

Mom has always found a way to make time for the causes that matter to her, and in doing so has shown the importance of committing time and resources to love others in her care for all of God's Creation.