

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Mar 13th 2011**

Sunday, 13th March 1st Sunday of Lent

Temptations are a normal part of our existence. It is how we deal with them that shows what we are made of. The fall of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis demonstrates the result of falling into temptation and the desert experience of Jesus details the growth that comes from facing up to and overcoming them. The First Sunday of Lent uses the episode in the life of Jesus when he is led by the Spirit into the desert following his baptism in the Jordan and before he begins his public ministry to help us overcome our trials and tribulations. We replicate his forty days in the desert by our forty days of Lent. We are encouraged to make this a special time to prepare ourselves for Holy Week when we recall the great moments of our redemption when Jesus died on the cross and rose again. To be able to share in Christ's triumph over suffering and death we must also share in his passion.

Jesus' temptation in the desert by Satan was threefold. First the Devil was playing on what the thought was Jesus' vulnerability after his long fast and challenging his miracle working powers. Jesus reminds him that we also live by God's word. Second, Satan plays on Jesus' pride but Jesus would have none of it and rejects the temptation. Thirdly, Jesus is tempted by power and dominion. Again he repulses the Devil by reminding him that it is only God we worship and serve.

Our temptations might not be so dramatic or grand and are probably in fact much more mundane and ordinary but despite their size, are we able to overcome them with the same determination and single mindedness that Jesus showed? Probably not. These forty days of Lent can be used as a reminder that we should redouble our efforts to follow in Christ's footsteps as closely as possible. God does not tempt us beyond our strength but we don't always use all our powers to resist and take the easy path out.

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