

## Lent – Facing Temptations (Mt. 4:1-11)

Lent is a time to learn to resist the insinuating voices which invite us to the demands of the flesh and the world. Our model for Lent is Jesus who willed to be tempted by the devil for us, in order to have “compassion on our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15).

After 40 days of rigorous fasting, while He was feeling the pangs of hunger, Jesus was tempted by Satan to change **STONES INTO BREAD**. Temptations always come within our power and reach. We feel a need to justify our temptations when we yield to them. But Jesus had done something contrary to it. When Jesus was tempted to make stones into bread, he said, *“One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Mt. 4:1-11). Man’s life is far more dependent on the will of God than on material food. During this Lent, let us mortify ourselves from food and tell the Lord, “Lord, I live by Your Word and grace. Help me to focus my attention on you and depend on you more and more”.

Jesus experienced the temptation of **PRIDE**. He resolutely rejected the suggestion by the devil when the devil told Him to throw Himself down from the highest wall of the temple and be recognized and praised by all. But the Lord quotes the Bible and says, *“You shall not put to the test the Lord your God”*. The best means to conquering the temptation to pride and vanity is to choose exactly what humiliates us and makes us appear little in the eyes of others. It is not feeling great in the sight of others, but making God happy by living a life pleasing to God.

Jesus experienced the temptation of **AVARICE**. When the devil asked him to adore him and in return he would give everything to Jesus, Jesus says, *“Be off, Satan, worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone”*. He whose heart is firmly anchored in God will never let it detract them from His service by an attraction for, or envy of, earthly things. Satan is showing Him an easy way to save the people by worshipping him, but Jesus didn’t want any easy ways to save us, He wanted to prove His love by His death on the Cross and Resurrection and by giving us salvation. Let us not look for easy ways, but truly love God and our neighbor by our sacrifices and day to day mortifications.

Jesus was tempted because He willed it. In every temptation, He chose God in every situation. He did perfectly the will of God and has done nothing against it. It is impossible for us to live without temptations. Our virtue comes from overcoming temptations. If God permits us to be tempted, He does not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength, and accompanying every temptation, there is always a special actual grace sufficient to overcome it. Let us not be afraid of temptation, but face it because we have the grace that comes along with the temptation.

Lenten conversion should consist in a generous determination to put ourselves more resolutely in the way of perfection, to become a saint. The desire for sanctity is the mainspring of the spiritual life. When we are purified of everything contrary to God’s will, then the Lord will communicate His Supernatural Being to us. So let us begin this Lent and be rooted in Christ who takes care of us and finally leads us to the Resurrection.

Rev. Dr. Louis Maram Reddy  
Pastor, St. Mary’s Church, Tomahawk, WI