

## 1st Sunday of Lent Year C – Mar 9th, 2025

### The Temptation of Jesus - Lk 4:1-13

For readings ... see [here](#).

We just heard how Jesus was tempted.

For all of us, temptation is nearly constant in life from when we are very young.

One example is with little children who want **their things**. They want to have their toy and if their brother or sister starts playing with **their** toy, they often get very angry and may fight to take it away. This is an example of a child giving in to the temptation to be selfish. Well, this happens unless the parents and older siblings have shown them about sharing which comes from the virtue of charity or love. I have seen very young children share ... when they have had lots of diligent training and good examples from those around them, especially their older brothers and sisters *and their parents*. That's right, parents have their desires, too, and want certain things and they often disagree with each other and need to resolve conflicts. All of us need to learn and focus on being more charitable which often contrasts with our desire for earthly things.

Temptation comes in many ways:

- When we see or think about some very delicious food, we can be tempted to eat too much or to break a required fast. On the other hand, we can be overly concerned with our appearance ... our weight and be tempted to consider some good foods as bad or evil ... or we can hurt our health with too much dieting.
- When an alcoholic drink or some drug makes us feel good, we can be tempted to use it too much and too often. On the other hand, we can be tempted to say all alcoholic beverages or drugs are bad or evil, when we see someone become addicted and ruin their life.
- When we see the good things money can buy, we can be tempted to fall in love with money which inhibits charity. On the other hand, we can be tempted to say

money is bad or evil ... when we see someone become rich through greed and other sins.

- We all have the desire to be right and not wrong ... in the eyes of others or for our own sake. This can lead to the sin of pride. On the other hand, we can be tempted to think lowly of ourselves ... when we have made some serious mistakes.

There are many, many other examples of temptations like lustful desires that need to be tamed ... from when we are young all the way through adulthood. Or when we see abuse or experience a broken relationship, we can be tempted to think all intimacy is bad and not seek to use the beauty of human intimacy the way God intended for us.

Not only do we have temptations, but we have an unbelievable capacity to justify to ourselves that what we are doing is just fine. We have the lies of the evil one that can creep into our minds ... We can argue with ourselves ... that a temptation to sin isn't a temptation.

One false justification we encounter and hear ... if it feels so good, how could it be bad. Well, revenge can feel very good ... when we have been seriously wronged or hurt ... but we know it's not good. I HOPE! Another false excuse is "this activity is just me ... it doesn't hurt anybody." Yes it does ... if it's a sin it hurts your soul and will impact your relationships. The world is full of immoral behavior and false justifications.

Yes, there are many sins and many traps we can fall into.

Sin comes when we accept a temptation and commit the sin. This can happen when we aren't prepared to deal with the temptations ... when we don't have the spiritual strength or grace or haven't learned or accepted how terrible sin is and how it enslaves us.

So, how do we grow so we can resist temptations? ... so we can stay free of the entrapments of sin that enslave us into things like: too much food, or too much drink, or lust like using pornography, ... or hatred, or anger problems ... so many possible sins that interfere or even break our relationship with God and neighbor! How can we resist?

Father's homily last week was excellent in describing how our lenten exercises of almsgiving, increased prayer, and fasting help us. I encourage you to read it ... it is on our website. I'm happy to help you find it ... just contact me.

We need to be humble and admit that we need help. We can't do this on our own. We need help from God... We need to regularly and continually ask God for help. And during Lent, we should kick it up a notch. As Father Sirba mentioned, we have prayer... regular conversation with God ... whenever and wherever we are ... especially when we detect a temptation or realize we are sinning or stuck in some sinful behavior. We should have prayers memorized (like the Hail Mary and the Our Father) and turn to them as soon as we realize we are off track and when we experience temptation. ... Ask God ... **thy will be done in me now ... please.**

We also need to increase our grace by using the sacraments, especially confession and the Eucharist. This helps us defeat the attacks that come. Without help from God, we are toast ... so yes, ... we need more grace and during lent, we should all consider going to confession at least once and, if possible, attending mass more often than just on Sundays.

Another thing we practice during lent (or really anytime) are the virtues (giving of ourselves ... like almsgiving). Giving of our time, talent, and treasure all contribute to fighting the temptation to be selfish or to love our personal time and stuff ... and money above others.

A specific virtue we practice during Lent is **obedience**. The Church gives us specific instructions of things to do during Lent. Obediently doing these exercises as instructed helps us overcome temptations to disobey God and His Church. We practice obedience when we abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent. Even though we may have better ideas, it is better to just obey and do what the Church asks. Fasting not only helps us with obedience but with the virtue of temperance ... to help manage how and what we do. Are we having trouble with food or drink or drugs or TV use or stuck on our electronic devices playing games or spending too much time on social media? ... we should fast from these things, too. That helps

build the virtue of temperance ... self control. We need to avoid temptations that lead us to overdo things that interfere with our responsibilities and infiltrate our minds with unholy things..

So let us all seek the help from God ... through prayer, the sacraments, and by building up our virtues to ward off the temptations that continually bombard us ... so we can grow towards being the best version of ourselves! AMEN