

## The Temptation of Jesus

My dear friends in Christ,

Today's gospel reading presents us with the temptation of Jesus. Notice that the Gospel began by telling us that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert. In other words, Jesus was not alone in the desert. Naturally speaking, you would think that the devil seeing Jesus and the Holy Spirit would retreat, but he was determined to derail Jesus from his mission of transforming lives and saving souls. Jesus' temptation ended in victory and became the beginning of the reconstruction and reunification of the world because despite the inducement to satisfy the self, he remained selfless.

On Ash Wednesday, we heard about the three pillars of Lent namely, *prayer, fasting and almsgiving*, and we were encouraged to go into the desert of our hearts for forty days and strive to embrace these pillars of our faith. It is appropriate that we are reminded today that faith in God and our efforts to pray, fast, and give alms do not exempt us from or make us less vulnerable to temptations rather, when we do not get discouraged in the face of tribulations, we become stronger and grow deeper in our faith.

Just like Jesus our Savior, we will face different kinds of temptation. Part of our temptation may be that we gave up something for Lent and try to reward ourselves in some other way; it may be that we constantly seeking attention or approval for works of charity; it may even be that after a few days into Lent, forty days begin to appear too long and you begin to slip away from upholding what we gave up for Lent. Whatever the case, I encourage you to persevere and journey with Christ till the end.

With Jesus we pray "Our Father...lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," Amen.

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### Appreciation

Our Knights' breakfast in the parish hall last Sunday was a success. Many of you, even some who came to Saturday vigil Mass, attended the Sunday breakfast. I thank the Knights of Columbus in our parish for saying yes to this wonderful initiative, and the brother Knights from St. Monica's for coming to help and support us. We truly appreciate the Knights for their service to our parish community.

Last Tuesday's Mardi Gras celebration was spectacular. It was festive, joy-filled, and we had many visitors who expressed gratitude for how hospitable our parishioners were. I thank Dr. Gail McClave, Mike and Sharon Hennick, Elaine Caldwell, Laura Doffing, and everyone who sponsored, decorated, cleaned up and helped to make it a memorable day for us.

--Fr. Anthony Ahamefule