

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT February 26, 2023

### Gospel: (Matthew 4:1-11)

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "*It is written: One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.*" The devil took him to the city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. . . . Jesus answered him, "*Again it is written, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this Jesus said to him, "*Get away, Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall your worship and him alone shall you serve.*"

### Reflection:

We are never immune to temptation; it is real. But temptation always brings choice, decision, and greater self-knowledge. In the case of the Son of God, his choice was also between God and Satan, his decision was to be faithful to God's Law and revelation, and his greater self-knowledge led him out of the desert to begin his public ministry. In our daily living we must place our temptations and the choices within the context of the commandment to love God and neighbor. This is Lent's challenge and invitation. (Living Liturgy, p. 64).

### Vincentian Meditation:

Frederic Ozanam suffered temptations against his faith, and he was literally brought to his knees. Thanks to a friend, we know that: "In the darkest hour of trial, which had become for him actual pain, the young student appealed to the mercy of God for light and peace. He threw himself on his knees before the Most Blessed Sacrament, and there in tears and in all humility, he promised Our Lord that, if He would deign to make the lamp of truth shine in his sight, he would consecrate his life to its defense." —Bl. Frederic Ozanam (Ramson, Praying with Frederic, p.50)

### Discussion: (Share your thoughts after a moment of silence)

**What phrases in Frederic's words are most significant to you?  
Share these insights with each other.**

### Closing Prayer:

Lord, during this Lent, give us the grace to:  
Fast from apparent darkness; **to feast on the reality of light.**  
Fast from personal anxiety; **to feast on eternal truth.**  
Fast from discouragement; **to feast on hope.**  
Fast from temptations; **to feast on prayer and silence. Amen**

