

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

March 9, 2025

Gospel: (Luke 4:1-13)

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. ...The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered: "*It is written: One does not live on bread alone.*"...The devil then said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and glory...All this will be yours, if you worship me." Jesus replied: "*It is written: You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.*" ...Then the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you and with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone." Jesus said to him in reply, "*It also says: You shall not put the Lord, you God, to the test.*" When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.

Reflection:

Try as he might by offering every attractive thing—wealth, power, esteem—the devil couldn't prove stronger. The gentle persuasion of prayer and fasting kept Jesus stronger and able to resist temptation. Not even the Son of God was exempt from being tested!

Temptation, then, isn't necessarily a sign of great sinfulness. It is an occasion for showing that our lives are turned to God, for remaining steadfast in the faith that we profess. Lent isn't simply our desert time to overcome temptation. It is also a springtime of renewed relationship to God. It is a time when we are strengthened, with the gentle warmth of God's Spirit leading us, to overcome even temptations to wealth, power, and esteem. (Living Liturgy, p.70)

Vincentine Meditation:

I urge you to reflect, during Lent, on the temptations that we inevitably meet as the Spirit guides us through the desert. None of us is spared these. The Spirit is a pillar of fire to lighten our path on the journey, but daily events allure us to follow other pillars of fire as we wander through the desert. But we find our hunger satisfied, our thirst quenched, only in the person of a loving, provident God who walks with us always. This Lent all of us must ask ourselves: what is the greatest temptation I face as a follower of St. Vincent?

(Maloney, Go! On the Missionary Spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul, p. 95)

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

What is the greatest temptation you face as a follower of Vincent and Frederic?

Closing Prayer:

For the grace to be detached from wealth,
-Jesus, we turn to you.

For the grace to be detached from power,
-Jesus, we turn to you.

For the grace to be detached from esteem,
-Jesus, we turn to you.

Amen

