

Welcome to Trinity

The address to the congregation states, "...on this day(Ash Wednesday) the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection." The season of Lent is a 40-day season in which God's baptized people dwell confidently upon God's Word giving attention "to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ." As we study God's Word, we examine ourselves so that with repentant hearts we may practice self-denial and put away any obstacles to God's grace that His kingdom may come.

All of this repentance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving is done with a specific goal in mind. "...that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth." That feast for us is the Lord's Supper at the break of day on Easter morning. On that sacred {Saturday} night we passover from sin and death to holiness and new life in the Resurrection of Our Lord.

Lent is nothing new to us. Our entire Christian life is a daily drowning of the old man in our baptism that through Christ's resurrection, we may live a new life and when our last day comes passover from death to eternal life.

Put it into Practice

These questions have been put together to help you as you extend and apply tonight's Scripture to your life.

Prayer

O Lord, mercifully hear our prayer and stretch forth the right hand of Your majesty to defend us from those who rise up against us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **AMEN.** *(Collect for the First Sunday in Lent, Invocavit)*

Word of God: St. Matthew 4:1-11 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

Immediately after Jesus' baptism, which is considering the beginning of His public ministry (Acts 1:22), He is tempted.

1. According to whose will (v.1) does Jesus go to be tempted?
2. Three things stand out:
 - A. Part of the testing included fasting, here--eating no food (Luke 4:2).
 - Who was tempted by food in Eden? (Genesis 3:1-6)
 - What is recorded immediately after the crossing of the Red Sea? _____Exodus 15:22-27, _____Exodus 16:1-36, _____Exodus 17:1-7
 - B. 40 days and 40 nights
 - God used a flood of this length(Gen 7:4) to cleanse the earth of evil(Gen 6:5), but it didn't work(Gen 8:21).
 - Israel spent this long in the wilderness but they continually grumbled against him and tested him (See 2A above).
 - Moses(Deut 9:9,18) fasted that long and God made a covenant with him and Israel. What was that covenant (Ex 34:28)?
 - God strengthened Elijah(1 Ki 19:8) for a 40 day/night journey?
 - C. God's firstborn son(Ex 4:22-23) was in the wilderness/desert.
3. First temptation(v.3): What situation casts doubt on Jesus' claim of sonship?
4. If Jesus had obeyed Satan and given proof of His sonship, what would that have said about the Spirit of God who led him into the desert?
5. What does Jesus say to show his perfect trust and the source of life?
6. Second temptation: Anyone can fast, if Jesus absolutely trusted in His Father for His bodily needs then trust God's Word in Psalm 91:11-12.
7. How does Jesus respond to this Scripture quoting tempter? (v.7)
8. What does this teach us about "Scripture interprets Scripture"?
9. Third temptation: Satan will make Jesus a king without any suffering or death, just a quick bow of worship. What commandment is at the heart of this temptation?
10. Can Satan give Jesus everything he doesn't have? Did Satan in Genesis 3:5?
11. Completely defeated and with nothing left to tempt Jesus, Jesus declares his victory with what words?(v.10a)
12. Once again, how does Jesus defeat Satan's attack? See Ephesians 6:17.

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #97, stanza 1
Sacrament of the Altar, 3
Psalm 51:17

7:00 PM Service For Ash Wednesday

Tonight, in place of our usual Catechetical services, we will have a full communion service.

For Prayer and Meditation

Here are some helps that could be used during the quiet times of the service or sometime throughout the season of Lent for prayer and meditation (contemplation of God's Word).

Prayers can be found in your hymnal on pages 124-133. Especially pertinent are those for before and after receiving the Sacrament(p.128). The propers(introit, collect, gradual, and readings) for Ash Wednesday can be found on page 31-32. Both the Old Testament hymnal (the Psalms, p.313-365) and our hymnody as taken from Holy Scripture are worthy of meditation. Especially appropriate for Lent are Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143 and Hymns #90 - #122.

Catechesis on St. Matthew 4:1-11

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. (NKJV)

The Devil's Work

"Then comes the devil, who baits and badgers us on all sides, but especially exerts himself where the conscience and spiritual matters are at stake. His purpose is to make us scorn and despise both the Word and the works of God, to tear us away from faith, hope, and love, to draw us into unbelief, false security, and stubbornness, or, on the contrary, to drive us into despair, atheism, blasphemy, and countless other abominable sins. These are snares and nets; indeed, they are the real "flaming darts" (Eph 6:16) which are venomously shot into our hearts, not by flesh and blood but by the devil" (LC III, 104). "He{the Devil} cannot bear to have anyone teach or believe rightly. It pains him beyond measure when his lies and abominations, honored under the most specious pretexts of

God's name, are disclosed and exposed in all their shame, when he himself is driven out of men's hearts and a breach is made in his kingdom. Therefore, like a furious foe, he raves and rages with all his power and might, marshaling all his subjects and even enlisting the world and our own flesh as his allies. ⁶³ For our flesh is in itself vile and inclined to evil, even when we have accepted and believe God's Word. The world, too, is perverse and wicked. These he stirs up, fanning and feeding the flames, in order to hinder us, put us to flight, cut us down, and bring us once more under his power. ⁶⁴ This is his only purpose, his desire and thought. For this end he strives without rest day and night, using all the arts, tricks, ways, and means that he can devise" (LC III, 62-64).

The Word defeats the Devil's Work

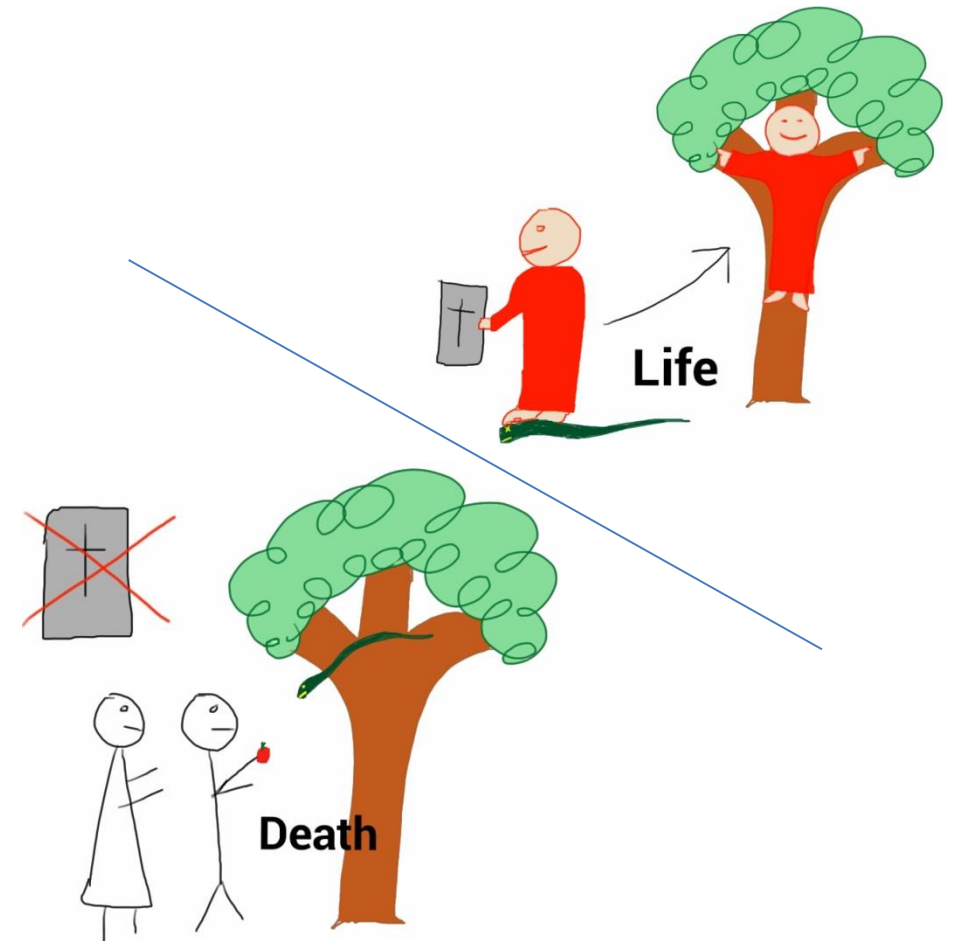
Ephesians 6:11, 14-17, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;"

1 Peter 5:8-10, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you."

"Therefore you must continually keep God's Word in your heart, on your lips, and in your ears. For where the heart stands idle and the Word is not heard, the devil breaks in and does his damage before we realize it. 101 On the other hand, when we seriously ponder the Word, hear it, and put it to use, such is its power that it never departs without fruit. It always awakens new understanding, new pleasure, and a new spirit of devotion, and it constantly cleanses the heart and its meditations. For these words are not idle or dead, but effective and living. 102 Even if no other interest or need drove us to the Word, yet everyone should be spurred on by the realization that in this way the devil is cast out and put to flight, this commandment is fulfilled, and God is more pleased than by any work of hypocrisy, however brilliant. (LC I 100b-102)

Catechesis for Lent One



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