

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF MAR 5-6, 2022**

First Sunday of Lent

**Gospel reading (Lectionary 24)**

Lk 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.
He ate nothing during those days,
and when they were over he was hungry.
The devil said to him,
“If you are the Son of God,
command this stone to become bread.”
Jesus answered him,
“It is written, *One does not live on bread alone.”*Then he took him up and showed him
all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant.
The devil said to him,
“I shall give to you all this power and glory;
for it has been handed over to me,
and I may give it whomever I wish.
All this will be yours, if you worship me.”

Jesus said to him in reply,
“It is written
 *You shall worship the Lord, your God,
 and him alone shall you serve.”*Then he led him to Jerusalem,
made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and 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, your God, to the test.”*When the devil had finished every temptation,
he departed from him for a time.

**Intercession**

For our parish community, that we might be more deeply rooted in our relationship with God the Father as we begin the Lenten season of prayer, penance, and almsgiving.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

It can be easy to read today’s Gospel primarily as an account of Jesus saying “no.” No to the devil’s temptations of earthly comfort, no to idols of power and glory, and no to arrogantly manipulating God’s will.

But this Gospel passage is as much about what Jesus is saying “yes” to as it is what he’s saying “no” to. Each denial of the devil is really a profound affirmation of Christ’s identity as the Son of God. Jesus rejects these temptations, not because things like bread or even ruling are bad, but because they’re being offered to him on the condition that He turns away from God the Father. In fact, Jesus’s relationship with the Father is the source of his resistance to the devil’s temptations. He isn’t “going it alone.” Instead, he’s relying upon the strength of the Father to carry him through. It’s relationship, not isolated “willpower,” that is the source of His strength.

This is such an important lesson for us as we begin our Lenten season. Lenten disciplines are not about proving our “spiritual toughness.” They’re about abandoning ourselves more fully to the Father, so that we might not “live on bread alone.” One way we do this during Lent is through the practice of *almsgiving*—giving to the poor or to some other worthy cause. One cause our parish is striving to support is the Annual Diocesan Appeal. At the beginning of this Lenten season, let’s embrace almsgiving as an opportunity to say “yes” to the Father and our relationship with Him.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Almsgiving is a staple of our Lenten disciplines as Catholics. As we begin this Lenten season, please consider supporting our Annual Diocesan Appeal as opportunity for almsgiving, and as a way to deepen your trust and dependency upon God the Father.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: A person praying.

Text: “*One does not live on bread alone*.”

Copy: Almsgiving is one way we can all grow in greater reliance upon God during this Lenten season. Prayerfully consider contributing to our Annual Diocesan Appeal as an act of Lenten almsgiving.