

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent A Cycle 3-5-17**

**Since I met Him, I can see! (Parish theme for Lent 2017)**

**We see Jesus comes out of the water of baptism by John in the Jordan  
He hears the words: You are my beloved Son in whom I am well  
pleased. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by  
the devil.**

**Meditated on the words for 40 days: You are my beloved Son in  
whom I am well pleased.**

**Devil decides the subject matter.**

**The devil begins his temptation, “If you are the son of God....”**

**In the first reading today Adam and Eve try to “be like God” by eating  
from the tree. But they try to be like God without God.**

**They forget that they are already loved and that God has given them  
EVERYTHING they need. They are in paradise!**

**We need to remember that we are the beloved of God**

**Let’s return to the first temptation: Jesus has fasted in the desert for  
40 days. The devil says, “If you are the Son of God turn these stones  
into bread.”**

**Jesus is physically empty, he was famished! but he very conscious that he is still the Beloved Son.**

**We are called to fast this Lent for 40 days. We like the Israelite people of old who journeyed in the desert for forty years to purify themselves and make themselves completely dependent on God.**

**The history of fasting from food during Lent has a long tradition in the Church. It was a natural flow from the very experience of European and Northern African peoples. Lenten fast took place as it does today**

- **Late winter**
- **Shortage of food**
- **If some ate well, others did not eat at all.**

**Now if we need some food, any kind of food, we simply go to the store and buy it. No one is starving around us. We are shielded from those dying from hunger in our world.**

- **Did you know that 40% of our food in the United States that goes uneaten.**
  - **The value of the food wasted is 165 billion dollars a year.**
  - **The number of people who could be fed each year if we just reduced our waste by 15% is 25 million.**

**Core reason for fasting is to be faithful and dependent on God and not ourselves and to show our love for our neighbor. That is why we have rice bowls. It is remind us of those in dire need throughout the world. That is why we take up a special collection for the Bishops' Overseas fund so that those who have may share with those who are in need throughout the world.**

**We come to deepen our relationship with God this season by involving ourselves in the sufferings of others, not by avoiding them.**

- **The pictures people chose in the back of church.**

**In the second temptation, the devil takes him to the city, to the highest pinnacle of the temple and says, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down and the angels will take care of you." Jesus refuses to base his relationship with his Father on what the Father will do for him. Jesus KNOWS that the Father considers him his beloved and that the Father will take care of his need.**

**As Jesus learns he may be hurt, he may even suffer and die, but he will still be the Beloved Son. Do we have that trust in the Lord? Do we believe that God will walk with us through the storms of life?**

- **Story of the woman whom we met of Friday night who had lost a son to violence in Detroit.**

- **Story of young man whose house had burnt down wanting prayer.**
- **Families in prayer at the back of church.**
- **Community at prayer; Emmaus faith sharing groups**

**The devil takes Jesus to a high mountain overlooking all the nations and says, “I will give you all these kingdoms of the world if you just fall down and worship me.**

**Jesus knows that even though he is politically powerless, he KNOWS that he is still the Beloved Son. Just like Israel out in the desert who were called to trust in God; I will be your God (I will be your God and never abandon you.) You will be my people and stay faithful to my covenant, but they are unfaithful, Jesus is out in the desert, remembers the words of his Father, you are my beloved son, and remains faithful.**

**During this season of Lent, we fast, pray and give alms not to become better people, but to remind ourselves that ALL our gifts and resources come from God and are meant to be spent in the service of others.**

**How many of us have taken The Little Black Book of Prayer and developed a PLAN to grow closer to the Lord this season?**

**Let us use this sacred season to grow close to Christ in prayer and to remind that we too, no matter what is happening in our lives, are the beloved of the Father. May our lives lived out for others be a strong witness that we have come to know how good God is!**

**Then we can say with Jesus, "Since I met Him, I can see!"**