

## Matthew Bible Study – Ash Wednesday

- Saturday, Feb. 29 retreat, “Encountering Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John: A Relationship that Changes Everything.”
- See handout on the tables for it. You may still sign up for this retreat by emailing Jay at [jlandry@stcatherinesiena.org](mailto:jlandry@stcatherinesiena.org) or calling 269-978-2331.
- Next week, Wednesday, March 4, we will meet at the regular times of 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. for this Matthew Bible Study.
- What is Lent? A time to work harder on my power? Or, depend more on God’s power and love?
- Opening Prayer – “Solo Dios Basta” (St. Teresa of Avila)
- Lectio Divina on Matthew 4:1-11 (Gospel for 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent)

## Matthew 4:1-11 The Temptations of Jesus

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

<sup>2</sup> He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry.

<sup>3</sup> The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup> He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you' and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'"

<sup>8</sup> Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, <sup>9</sup> and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." <sup>10</sup> At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

# Matthew 4:3-4 1<sup>st</sup> Temptation

<sup>3</sup> The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread."

<sup>4</sup> He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'" (Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3)

- What strikes you about this? What is this about?
- Who drives Jesus into the desert? Why?
- Why does the tempter begin with, "If you are the Son of God...?"
- I suggest the focus of the first temptation is about survival and security.
- Where do I turn for survival and security?
  - a. To magic that turns a stone into bread? (Based in my power, my ego)
  - b. To God for God's word? (Based in faith in God)
- For a person in whom the desire for security has never been moderated by reason, there is never enough security no matter how much wealth or power is accumulated.
- **This is why we fast in Lent** – that we might depend on God and not our own ways of providing for and saving us.

# Matthew 4:3-4 1<sup>st</sup> Temptation

- The devil begins this temptation with “If you are the Son of God...” with the goal of getting Jesus to use his power that he uses to heal, raise the dead, and channel the power of God through the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus passes the test. How? He embraces faith in God that God will provide for him what he needs.
- This is why he is in the desert for 40 days: to practice and embrace depending on God alone for his survival and security.
- On whom or what do I depend for survival and security?
- Let’s spend a minute in prayer asking Jesus to lead me this Lent in how he wants me to grow in depending on him, not my own devices, for survival and security.

# Matthew 4:5-7 2<sup>nd</sup> Temptation

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down.

For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you' and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

(Satan quotes Psalm 91:11-12. Why? Jesus does and Satan uses holy words for evil purposes)

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'" (Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:16)

- What strikes you about this? What is this about?
- Why does the tempter begin with, "If you are the Son of God...?"
- I suggest the focus of the second temptation is about affection and esteem.
- Where do I turn for affection and esteem?
  - a. To tempt God to save me by jumping off the temple, demanding that God save me?
  - b. To God's words after Jesus' baptism, "This is my beloved son/daughter, with whom I am well pleased"?
- If I have not grounded my needs for affection and esteem in God, I will build up my false self, who can never be satisfied and is easily offended.
- **This is why we pray (even more) in Lent** – that we would see that our needs for affection and esteem cannot be met through my seeking success in results. Rather, it comes from realizing that God loves me first that empowers me to be good, trusting that I can embrace my true self who cannot be offended.
- The invitation is to embrace the words of St. Teresa of Avila, "Solo Dios Basta" or "Only God satisfies." Only God can satisfy the longings of the human heart.

## Matthew 4:5-7 2<sup>nd</sup> Temptation

- The devil begins this temptation with “If you are the Son of God...” with the goal of getting Jesus to use his power to demand that God act out of affection and esteem.
- Jesus passes the test. How? I suggest that he trusts the words of his Father from his baptism.
- This is why he is in the desert for 40 days: to practice and embrace depending on God alone for his affection and esteem.
- Where do I look to have my needs for affection and esteem met?
- Let’s spend a minute in prayer asking Jesus to lead me this Lent in how he wants me to grow in depending on him, not my own devices, for affection and esteem.
- How is Jesus calling me to spend more time in prayer this Lent that I might trust him to meet my needs of affection and esteem?
- Let us turn to Jesus asking him for this now.

# Matthew 4:8-10 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation

<sup>8</sup> Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, <sup>9</sup> and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." <sup>10</sup> At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"

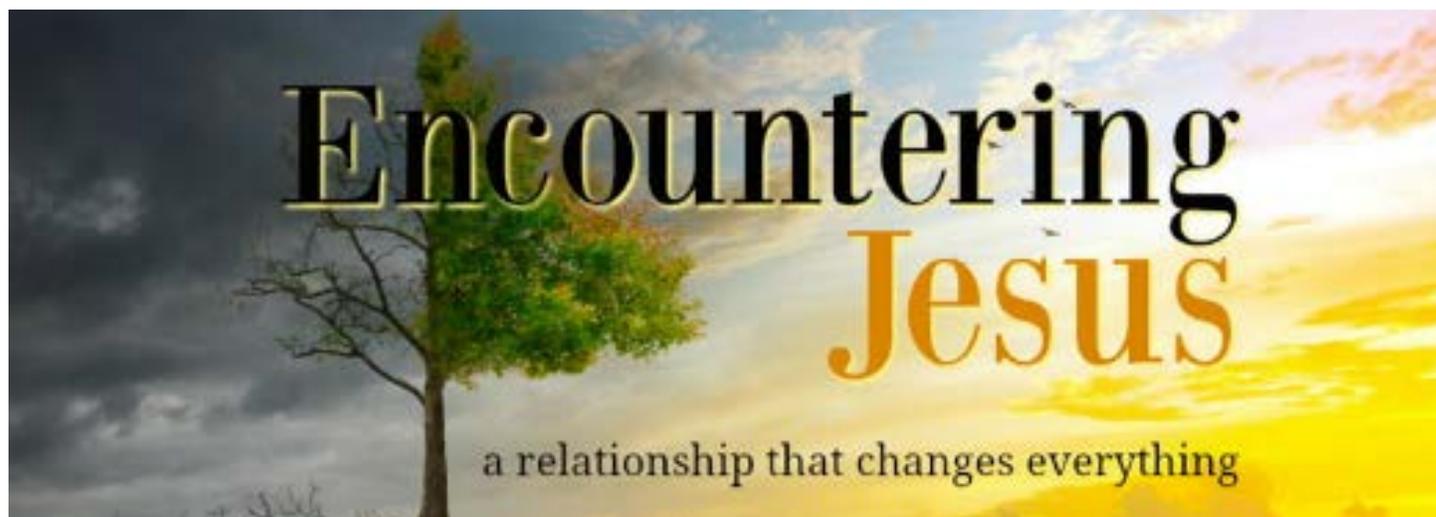
(Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:13)

- What strikes you about this? What is this about?
- I suggest the focus of the third temptation is about the glamour of evil found in power and control.
- Where do I turn for power and control?
  - a. To violate the first commandment, placing a false god before God?
  - b. To Jesus' embrace of the first commandment, to serve God alone?
- This is such a difficult temptation for all of us, for none of us thinks that we bow down to Satan, yet, are there subtle ways that we do this?
- **This is why we give of ourselves in Lent (and not just alms)** – that we would see that our needs for power and control are lessened and even replaced by God's power and control when we focus on others and not ourselves, especially when Jesus commands us to love our enemies and to pray for our persecutors.
  - a. One of the ways that we can give alms is by praying for others, especially our enemies and those whom we don't like as St. Therese of Lisieux prayed for the nun whom she could not stand. Further, she reached out to her every time that she saw her, for when we pray for others, it changes our behavior towards them.
  - b. **Thus, St. Therese sought to enter into communion with someone whom she did not like at all. To me, this is giving of myself to others, embracing Jesus' command to love our enemies.**

## Matthew 4:8-10 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation

- Why does the devil drop “If you are the Son of God...” in this temptation?
- How does Jesus pass this test?
- I suggest that Jesus is in the desert, with Satan in his face, tempting him with an easier road, such as, “Jesus, you know that you don’t have to go down the road to Calvary if you bow down to me, and you get all these kingdoms.”
- This is what all the empires of the world have embraced: building an empire through might and manipulation. Thus, God crushing them all because they mock God by seeking to be God, for they seek to crush and enslave their enemies, rather than loving them.
- Jesus responds by quoting Deut 6:13 about worshipping God alone.
- And, Jesus, because he embraces the road to Calvary, the one designed for him by God the Father, he receives dominion over all things (see Matthew 28:18) because of his obedience to his Father.
- Where do I look to have my needs of power and control met?
- Let’s spend a minute in prayer asking Jesus to lead me this Lent in how he wants me to grow in depending on him to meet my needs for power and control? His call to meet these needs is for me to embrace the cross in Matthew 16:24-28 as Jesus himself will embrace the cross unto death.
- How is Jesus calling me to spend more time in giving of myself to others this Lent that I might trust Jesus to meet my needs of power and control?
- Matthew 16:24-25, “<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”
- Let us pray that Jesus would help us let go of seeking power and control the way the world does and seek it through the cross.

# Encounter Jesus in John's Gospel



**Lent Retreat – Saturday, Feb. 29, 2020**  
**8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

- **Three Encounters with Jesus in John's Gospel**



**The Woman at the Well**



**The Man Born Blind**



**The Raising of Lazarus**

- Jay Landry will offer three talks **where we encounter Jesus Christ** in these Gospel passages where Jesus calls us into a love relationship with him that makes all things new.
- The retreat includes talks, quiet time, and prayer.
- Lunch will be served. A donation of \$5 is suggested to help cover lunch costs.
- Please bring a bible and a friend. Hospitality begins at 8:30 a.m. The retreat begins closer to 9:00 a.m. **Child care is available.**
- If you wish to come, please RSVP to Jay at [jlandry@stcatherinesiena.org](mailto:jlandry@stcatherinesiena.org) or 269-978-2331 by Thursday, Feb. 27. Early RSVPs are appreciated. Please inform Jay of food allergies.