



LENT

Days of Fasting and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.

For members of the Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.

This week...Feb. 20 - 26

Mass Times:

Sat. 4:30 PM

Sun. 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 5:30 PM (Rite of Election 10:00 AM Mass)

Daily: Mon.- Sat. 8:00 AM

Stations of the Cross: Fri. 7:00 PM

Confession: Sat. 3:30 PM

**Sat. 11:00 AM: Rosary for the end of Covid 19 virus Conference call number: 717-275-8940
PIN Number 369 8340#**

Pastor's Weekly Message First Sunday of Lent B

"The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness"

In the Gospel, we see Jesus, the Son of God, being tempted by Satan. "The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness, and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan." It is the Spirit—the Holy Spirit—who drove Jesus into the wilderness. Jesus is there alone and yet, *NOT alone*. Because the Spirit, who has led Him there, is with Him. Jesus stays there for forty days and He was tempted by Satan.

We are surprised to see Jesus, the Son of God Himself, tempted as we are. A temptation is something that pulls us, draws us, or pushes us...to do something. What happens when we are tempted to do something bad or evil? There is a struggle that takes place within us. A struggle between two spirits. In each one of us, there is a *good spirit*—the one that leads us to do the good things—and there is also the *bad spirit*—the one who pulls us to do the evil things. One pulls us in one direction, *the other*, in the opposite direction. They fight each other in us. That is what temptation is: a struggle to allow the good spirit to win over the evil spirit. In today's Gospel, we see that even Jesus was faced with the struggle. And we, too, are faced with it, *day after day*. For example, there is that woman who seems to gossip all the time... You could say she is a 'betrayal of private information.' She likes to tell you the *secret* stories of everyone around. She knows that, by doing this, she often destroys the good name of people. So, in fact, she is not gossiping all the time, but she is fighting to overcome this bad habit. Of course, we do not see her struggle, but she really tries. Again, look at this person... He is often pushed to cheat and even to steal, a small bit here, a little more there... But, sometimes, you see him giving generously to the beggars on the street. If he could tell you the secret of his heart, he would explain to you that he is fighting. Fighting the evil spirit within himself. Both individuals in the two examples are trying, *really trying*.

What about us? Are we really struggling, or have we given up this fight? Do we allow ourselves simply to be carried along by the power of evil? Or, do we try to make a serious effort to overcome the evil within us? Like Jesus in the wilderness, we are not alone. The Holy Spirit who was with Jesus, *is also with us*. He is ready to help us. He is the Spirit of fortitude, or strength, we received when we were baptized and confirmed. Do we call on Him to help us overcome the evil spirit? With *His* strength, we can be faithful to God, as Jesus was.

We have started this period called LENT. The period of preparation for Easter. It is a good time to look at my life. A good time to stand back from my usual routine, and ask myself: Who is in control within me? Is it this *Holy Spirit*, or the evil spirit? I can see if I am following God's way for me, or if I am following my own path—away from Him. If I see that I am not following Him *the way He wants for me*, let me ask Him to bring me back for: "The Lord is good...He shows the path of those who stray. Lord, make me know your ways, Lord teach me your path."

During LENT, it is good to do something *more than usual*, to tell God 'I want to come closer to Him.' I want my friendship with Him to be deeper and stronger. If you can, why not come to Mass once or twice during the week? Remember the sufferings and death of Christ; consider taking part in the Stations of the Cross every Friday of Lent in the church. Pray the Rosary at home; read your Bible for a short while every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you—to help you with your own struggles. me tell you all about it