

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

February 17, 2013
First Sunday of Lent

Gospel 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 to 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.

Spiritual Reflection:

Archbishop Fulton Sheen in his book: *The Life of Christ* points out: "It was precisely this part of Our Lord's Mission that the devil attacked. The temptations were meant to divert Our Lord from His task of salvation through sacrifice. Instead of the cross as means of winning the souls of men, Satan suggested three short cuts to popularity: an economic one, another based on marvels, and a third, which was political."

Spiritual Questions:

1. Why do you think that the Holy Spirit led Jesus to the desert to be tempted?
2. Do you think that these were one time temptations or temptations that Jesus faced throughout his whole life or both?
3. What power does the devil have to back up anything he says?
4. Why is sacrifice such a big part of Jesus' mission
5. Which temptation speaks the most to you?

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