

First Week of Lent: 3 Temptations

Our Lenten theme is ‘You are that man / woman’ – a call to a direct encounter with our own soul.

This week we reflect on Jesus – his moment of confrontation with the devil!

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. It was a divine destiny. The son of God was to confront the devil. The source of all goodness had to face the archetype of evil.

After fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, Jesus was hungry. He was physically exhausted and weakened. At that moment of vulnerability, the devil slithered in, to tempt Jesus.

The devil sought to provoke an identity crisis in Jesus. “If you are the Son of God,” he began, aiming to implant inner conflict and personal disorientation at the very core of who Jesus was.

“Turn this stone into bread, and throw yourself down from the temple’s parapet, if you are the Son of God,” the devil tempted. It attempted to coerce Jesus into proving His identity through miraculous feats. But should Jesus validate His divinity for the devil? Absolutely not, and he did not.

Jesus faced Satan. He encountered the core of evil. The devil quoted the Bible. Jesus paid him back in the same coin. The demon enticed. Jesus repelled.

Then came the final lure: ‘Worship me, I will give you the glories of the world.’ Can darkness bury the light? Can a pond contain the Ocean? Can a lie falsify the Truth?

Now the Almighty spoke: “Begone, Satan!” “The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.”

Jesus' encounter with evil ended. Satan left him. Jesus conquered. The devil was vanquished.

We face temptation alone, and alone we must overcome it. Without fleeing, whining, blaming, compromising and conceding, we should fight and overcome evil with God's power.