

## WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

**Readings:** Deuteronomy 26:4-10  
Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15  
Romans 10:8-13  
Luke 4:1-13

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent  
February 21, 2010

**Word:** **Disciples of Christ obey His call to spread the Good News of salvation.**

**Theme:** **We spread the Good News of salvation when we confess with our mouths and witness with our lives that Jesus is Lord.**  
[Piety]

**Promise:** ***“No one who believes in him will be put to shame.”***  
(Romans 10:11)

### Reflection:

The temptation of Jesus by the devil is probably one of the greatest milestones in the life of the Lord. The event takes place when Jesus is about to begin his campaign to bring people to God. Commonsense tells us that before a man undertakes a task, regardless of his objectives, he must first choose his methods.

The temptation story shows Jesus choosing once and for all the method by which He proposes to win men to God. It shows Him rejecting the way of power and glory and accepting the way of suffering and the cross.

But before we go on with this story, there are just two main points we need to look at:

1. This is the most sacred of stories, for it can only have come from no other source but His own lips. It is also possible that there may have been an instance when Jesus could have told His disciples about this most intimate experience of His soul, although this is not narrated in the Bible.
2. Even at this time, Jesus must have already been aware of His quite exceptional powers. The whole point of the temptation is that they could only happen to a man who could do astonishing things. It would be no temptation for us ordinary mortals, for instance, to turn stones into bread or to leap from the top of the Temple, for the simple reason that it is impossible for us to do such things. These are temptations which could have only come to a man whose powers were unique, and who had to make a decision on how to use them.

To appreciate the temptation story, we must not think that the three temptations came and went like scenes in a play. Rather, we should think of Jesus

deliberately retiring to this lonely place and, for 40 days, wrestling with the problem of how He could win men. The story ends with the verse that tells us the tempter left Jesus, but the battle was long and did not cease until the cross.

The first temptation was the challenge to turn stones into bread. This wilderness was not a wilderness of sand. It was covered by chunks of limestone that resembled loaves of bread. The tempter said "if you want people to follow you, use your powers to give them material things." What he was suggesting was for Jesus to bribe people into following Him. Jesus' reply is found in Deut 8:3 "**A man,**" He said, "**will never find life in material things.**" The task of Christianity is not to produce new conditions of life, although the weight and voice of the church must be behind all efforts to make life better for men. But the real task of Christianity is to produce new men and, given the new men, the new conditions will follow.

In the second temptation, Jesus stands upon a mountain with the whole civilized world spread out before him. The tempter says "worship me, and all these will be yours." This is the temptation to compromise. What the devil was saying was: "I have got people in my grip. Don't set your standards so high. Strike a bargain with me. Just compromise a little with evil and men will follow you." And back came the reply of Jesus "God is God; right is right and wrong is wrong. There can be no compromise in the war on evil." Once again, Jesus quotes Scriptures in Deut. 6: 13; 10; 20.

It is a constant temptation to seek to win men by compromising with the standards of the world. One of the great spiritual writers once said that the tendency of the world is to see things in terms of an indeterminate grey, but the duty of the Christian is to see things in terms of black and white. Another spiritual author also said "the Christian must be consumed by the conviction of the infinite beauty of holiness and the infinite damnability of sin."

In the third temptation, Jesus is standing at the pinnacle of the Temple where Solomon's Porch and the Royal Porch meet. There is a sheer drop of 450 feet down into the Kidron valley below. The temptation is the challenge to accomplish sensational deeds. Jesus could easily have jumped off from the precipice and floated on air, but He said "No. You must not make senseless experiments with the power of God," (Deut 6: 16). Jesus saw quite clearly that if, like some masters of illusion today, he dazzles people with sensational acts he could be a nine days' wonder, but he also saw that sensationalism would never last.

It is the hard way of service and suffering that leads men to the cross, but for those who take up their cross are assured of the crown after bearing their cross.

**Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:**

- 1). What is the first thing that comes to our minds when we are faced with temptation?
  
- 2). Do we compromise with our faith and beliefs when we are faced with temptation? What areas in our lives are prone to temptation? Could be our temper, our lips, our thoughts, or even our desires? What are the things that we have applied in our lives that we may be able to resist temptation.

**Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:**

February 22, 2010 (Mon):	1 Pt 5:1-4; Ps 23:1-6; Mt 16:13-19
February 23, 2010 (Tue):	Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15
February 24, 2010 (Wed):	Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32
February 25, 2010 (Thur):	Est 4:12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7-8; Mt 7:7-12
February 26, 2010 (Fri):	Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26
February 27, 2010 (Sat):	Dt 26:16-19; PS 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48

***“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”***