

21st Feb 2010 - 1st Sunday of Lent

Deut 26:4-10

Rom 10:8-13

Lk 4:1-13

Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights and was tempted by the devil

What motivated Jesus to spend 40 days and nights of solitude, prayer and fasting in the Judean wilderness? This desert landscape was largely uninhabitable and was full of dangers for anyone who dared to venture in it for long. Danger from scorching heat by day and extreme cold at night, danger from wild animals and scorpions, plus the deprivation of food and the scarcity of water.

For the chosen people of Israel the desert was a place of testing, encounter, and renewal. When the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt, they wandered 40 years in the wilderness. This was seen as a time of purification and preparation for entry into the Promised Land. Moses went to the mountain of the Lord at Sinai and stayed there for 40 days and nights in prayer and fasting (Exodus 24:18). Elijah, after he was fed with bread from heaven, journeyed without any food for 40 days to the mountain of God. (1 Kings 19:8). Jesus journeyed without any food to the wilderness for 40 days to prepare himself for the mission that the Father had sent him to accomplish.

Why did Jesus choose such a barren, lonely place for an intense and long period of sustained prayer and fasting? Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us in their gospel accounts that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. Mark states it most emphatically: "The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness" (Mark 1:12). What compelled Jesus to seek solitude, away from his family and friends, for such a lengthy period? Was it simply a test to prepare him for his mission? Or did Satan want to lure him into a trap? The word *tempt* in English usually means to entice someone to do what is wrong or forbidden. The scriptural word used here also means *test* in the sense of proving and purifying someone to see if there are ready for the task at hand. We test flight pilots to see that they are fit to fly under all conditions, including times of adverse turbulence and poor visibility. Likewise God tests his servants to see if they are fit and ready to be used by him. On many occasions God tested Abraham to prove his faith and to strengthen his hope in God's promises. Abraham obeyed willingly even when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac, the son of promise. When the Israelites were sorely tested in Egypt for more than 400 years, they did not forget God. They kept God's word and remembered his promise to bring them freedom from their enemies.

Jesus was no exception to this pattern of testing. He went to the desert without food or shelter. Adam and Eve had everything they needed in the Garden of Paradise. But they ate of the forbidden fruit out of disobedience because they trusted in themselves rather than in God. They were cast out of Paradise and driven into the wilderness. Jesus freely enters the wilderness in order to regain Paradise for those who lost it. Jesus refuses food to show his dependence on the bread of heaven, the word of God, that would sustain him not only in his physical hunger, but in his hour of temptation as well. When Satan tempts Jesus to turn stones into bread, Jesus replies with the words of scripture, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (quote from Deuteronomy 8:3; see also Matthew 4:4).

Where did Jesus find the strength to survive the desert's harsh conditions and the tempter's seduction? He fed on God's word and found strength in doing his Father's will. Satan will surely tempt us and he will try his best to get us to choose our will over God's will. If he can't make us renounce our faith or sin mortally, he will then try to get us to make choices that will lead us, little by little, away from what God wants for us.

Jesus was tempted like us and he overcame sin not by his own human effort but by the grace and strength, which his Father gave to him. He had to renounce his will for the will of his Father. He succeeded because he wanted to please his Father and he trusted that his Father would give him the strength to overcome the obstacles that stood in the way. Luke says that Jesus was "full of the Holy Spirit" (Luke 4:1). When tempted by the devil Jesus did not try to fight his adversary on his own human strength. He relied on the power, which the Spirit gave him. Jesus came to overthrow the evil one who held us captive to sin and fear of death (Hebrews 2:14). His obedience to his Father's will and his willingness to embrace the cross reversed the curse of Adam's disobedience. His victory over sin and death won for us not only pardon for our sins but adoption as sons and daughters of God.

How can we overcome sin and oppression in our personal lives? The Lord Jesus gives us his Holy Spirit to help us in our weakness (Romans 8:26) and to be our guide and consoler in temptation and testing (1 Corinthians 10:13). The Lord gives grace to the humble who acknowledge their dependence on him (James 4:6) and he helps us to stand against the attacks of our enemy, Satan, who seeks to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8-10; Ephesians 6:10-18). The Lord Jesus is ever ready to pour out his Spirit upon us that we may have the strength and courage we need to resist sin and to reject the lies and deceits of Satan. God wants us to "fight the good fight of the faith" (1 Timothy 6:12) with the power and strength which comes from the Holy Spirit. Do you rely on the Lord for your strength and help?

"Lord Jesus, your word is life and joy for me. Fill me with your Holy Spirit that I may have the strength and courage to embrace your will in all things and to renounce whatever is contrary to it."

Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity

21st February 2010



20 Tampines Street 11
Singapore 529455
Website: www.holytrinity.org.sg

Parish Priest: Fr. Edward Lim

Asst. Priests: Fr. Albert Ng

Fr. Paul Ngo Thanh Phong

Parish Staff: Ms Catherine Thang

Ms Nancy Goh

Kindergarten: admin@holytrinitykindergarten.edu.sg

Principal: Mrs Shirley Tan

Tel: 6784 1211

Tel: 6784 3190

Tel: 6784 6418

Tel: 6784 2332

Fax: 67865042

Tel: 67874651

Fax: 67837559

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 6:30am, 5:00pm (Novena); 6:00pm (Sunset Mass)

Sunday: 6:45am; 8am(Mandarin); 9:30; 11:15am & 6pm

Weekdays: 6:30am & 6pm

Public Holidays: 9am only

2nd Saturday: 7:30pm (Mass in Tagalog)

Readings for the Week

Mon 22 nd Feb	1 Pt 5:1-4	Ps 22:1-3a,3b-4,5,6	Mk 16:13-19
Tue 23 rd Feb	Is 55:10-11	Ps 33:4-5,6-7,16-17,18-19	Mk 6:7-15
Wed 24 th Feb	Jona 3:1-10	Ps 50:3-4,12-13,18-19	Lk 11:29-32
Thu 25 th Feb	Est 4:17	Ps 137:1-2a,2bc-3,7c-8	Mt 7:7-12
Fri 26 th Feb	Ez 18:21-28	Ps 129:1-2,3-4ab,4c-6,7-8	Mt 5:20-26
Sat 27 th Feb	Deut 26:16-19	Ps 118:1-2,4-5,7-8	Mt 5:43-48

INFANT BAPTISMS are celebrated at the 6pm Mass on the 2nd Sunday of each month, except during the season of Lent. Parents and Godparents are required to come for a preparatory session at 4pm in the Chapel. Please register at the parish office

WEDDINGS: Arrangements for a Church wedding should be made at least six (6) months in advance. This would give the couple adequate time to attend either a Marriage Preparation Course (MPC) or an Engaged Encounter Weekend (EE). Application forms and booking of wedding date at the parish office.

CHURCH CLEANING (Willing Hands)

Volunteers are needed - Every Wednesday & Saturday 9.00am

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Jumble Sales group is seeking volunteers to sort and pack donated items i.e. clothes, books, shoes, bags etc. every Monday between 12noon & 3pm. Those able to help, please leave your contact particulars with the church secretariat.

FREE COUNSELLING SERVICES

Ms Jackie (Appointment coordinator). Please call after office hours: 9797 8319

FREE LEGAL COUNSELING CLINIC. Please contact the parish office.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP For cancer patients / caregivers call:
Patrick 9728 7425 or Theresa 9681 9205

CANTEEN

Will be operated by PRE Group. Do come & give your support.

Neighbourhood

Tampines CNG -Lenten Reflection
Sat 27 Feb at 8.30 pm, Blk 306 # 02-08
Tampines St 32. All are welcome.
Enquiries: Jeffrey De Souza @ 96730576

SIMEI CNG - Lenten Reflection
Thurs 25 Feb, 8.15p.m at Blk 117 Simei
St.1 #08-540. All are welcome. Please
bring your bible. Enquiries: Daniel Tan
97522402

HOLY FAMILY SHRINE will be at Terence & Jocelyn Ang, Blk 134, Pasir Ris St 11 #03-257 from 22nd to 28th Feb. Enquiries: Phillip Fan: 9746-5678/ 9437-2526

Monday 22nd Feb

POWERHOUSE Rosary Devotion Prayer for 22nd February, Monday at 8pm in the chapel. All are welcome

RCIA CHINESE 7.45pm n the hall

TUESDAY, 23rd Feb

Prayer for Priests – 5pm in the Chapel. All are invited

CHARISMATIC PRAYER COMMUNITY - Breaking the Word

RCIA ENGLISH – 7.45pm in the parish hall.

WEDNESDAY 24th Feb

Divine Mercy Devotion in the Chapel at 8pm. All are welcome.

THURSDAY 25th Feb

CHINESE STATION OF THE CROSS IN TEOCHEW will be held in the chapel on every Thursday at 8pm during the period of Lent.

FRIDAY, 26th Feb - WAY OF THE CROSS

Mass at 7.00pm will be held in the Main Church followed by the Way of the Cross-during the period of Lent.

SATURDAY 6th Mar – IGNITE Lenten Reflection: Fasting & Sacrifice time: Sat, 10am to 12pm at the youth room. Volunteer needed to clean the church and youth room. For more info call Jasmine: 81133802.

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL - Wish to thank all their benefactors for their generous donation of \$13,442.05 for the month of February.

EVERGREEN ACTIVITY – Jumble sale on 28th Feb will be donated to Villa Francis Home For the Aged. Visit to the Home is on 13 Mar Saturday. Bus leaves church @ 9.30am & ticket is at \$5.00 each. Please contact Jennifer @ 97925216 to confirm. All are welcome.

LENTEN PROJECT – The Parish Pastoral Council have proposed a project for the parish during the period of Lent. All are invited to make some sacrifices during this period and we will gather together to have an Easter celebration on the 18th of April. We will

collect the money for Haiti and others who are in need. Please get a copy of the letter for further the details.

Parish Renewal Experience – We are starting our PRE on the 8th of April 2010

THE SOJOURNERS COMPANIONS - A retreat in daily life. What will you be doing for Lent? Want to learn how to walk with Christ? The Sojourners Companions will be conducting a Week of Guided Prayer in this parish from 7 – 13 March 2010. During this Week, you will learn how to pray Scriptures using either of two prayer methods – Ignatian Contemplation & Lectio Divinia. These are valuable tools for you to communicate with God and to discover for yourself what God wants to tell you. These prayer methods can also be used in praying the Scriptures as described in the Lenten reflection booklet – Walking with Christ. We will begin the Week on Sunday afternoon to introduce the prayer methods and for you to meet your spiritual companion for the week.

Your commitment for the week: to spend 1 hour with God in personal prayer each day, and from Monday to Friday, to meet with your prayer guide for at most half-hour in church. The Week will end with a closing session on Saturday afternoon.

Registration will take place after the weekend masses on 27 and 28 Feb 2010. Registration forms will be available from your parish office as well, or you may email us at sojourners@ http://catholic.org.sg. For planning purposes, do register with us by 3 March 2010.

FAITH, HOPE AND OUR CATHOLIC CHARITIES BOOKLET – This booklet provides an insight into the work of our Catholic charities and community groups. It provides more information on the causes supported, programmes and services, stories of how lives are touched. Collect a copy from your parish this weekend to find out more about these organizations and the practical help available.

LENTEN JOURNEY RETREAT- ACCS is organizing a three Fridays afternoon sessions for Catholic teachers & educators. Date/Time: Friday, 5, 12, 26 Mar 2010 / 3pm to 6pm
Venus: St Luke's, 2 Highland Road, CAEC, Singapore 549102. Speakers: Fr Aloysius Ong & Sr Susan Thomas FMM. Registration fee for all three session is \$35 per person. For details contact Mr Louis On @ 68587085 or email louis oo @catholic.org.sg by Mon 1 March 2010

PAULINES PRAYER CAFÉ: Inviting all young women (single, age below 28) for a monthly prayer session with the Daughters of St. Paul at 47 Jurong West St. 42. An afternoon of prayers, sharing and fellowship, to journeying together towards self-discovery and deepening of one's relationship with the Lord. Join us on every first Saturday of the month, starting 6 March. Format for each session varies: adoration, praying with the media, faith sharing, etc. For more information and registration, please contact sr. Jocelyn at 65608003 or email: fspvocation@yahoo.com.

Know Your Religion

Baptism - When can we do a 'private baptism'? We do it only when there is an emergency, the person has asked for baptism, and when a person is dying and you cannot find a priest. Please note if the person dies after the 'private baptism' it does not mean that he/she is entitled to a Catholic funeral. The funeral rites of the other religions are alright. What is important is the soul of the person is saved and is with God even though they have a funeral service of other religion.

When you baptized a person without his consent and if he/she is dies, the baptism is not valid.

To be continued....