Lenten Reflections for EOHSJ
First Sunday of Lent 2019

Reflection by Rev. Stephen Porter, KCHS

Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13   The Temptation of the Lord

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.

Four days in – how's your Lent so far? Thirty-six to go... are you holding up? Jesus has just been baptized by John in the River Jordan and St. Luke has given us His credentials as the Son of God. Now He is about to endure a full 40 days of fasting and praying – surely we can join him? At least for the Fridays in Lent?

To help us be a little self-sacrificial, let's look at the temptations of Jesus... (if you've been to the Holy Land, I'm sure you've looked up at the Monastery of the Temptations where Jesus spent His time in a cave there. Maybe you've even taken the cable car up – that was fun!) Jesus is tempted by the devil in three specific ways – to eat (satisfy the body), to be grandiose (to satisfy the ego), and to test the love of His Father (to satisfy His security) and He refutes each with a carefully chosen text from what He knew to be the Scriptures (what we call the Old Testament – remember there was no New Testament yet).

So when we are tempted – big ones or little ones – we should arm ourselves with texts from the Scriptures to repel these attacks. Find a few favorite sayings of Jesus, St. Paul, or one of the others, and keep them in your heart. Whenever you are tempted, just pray them to yourself, and remember that that is the Word of God, and every word that comes from the mouth of God has power! One of my favorites is Luke 17:19: "Stand up and go on your way! Your faith has saved you!" Yes, I fall (too often, if truth be told) and need to stand up again, and yes, it is the faith that God has given me that saves me.

However as Knights and Ladies, I wish to challenge us to be more chivalrous during this Lent. For you fellow Knights – do you strive to live each day as a man of honor, with gallantry, humility, generosity and compassion, honoring and treasuring your lady, and family, and God? And for the Ladies – do you strive to live each day lovingly serving God, your family, and spouse as a godly Lady under God?

Our Order is not about personal honor and glory, it is about the service of our brothers and sisters, especially in the Holy Land, and assisting the Christians who live there be the best Christians they can be. The true marks of chivalry are shown by Jesus in respect of His Father, not putting His own Father – the Lord His (and our) God to the test. Let those marks of Christian chivalry be clear in each of us. May I, and you, never forget that.

Blessings.

Rev. Stephen Porter, KCHS, was invested in the Order in 2003 and has led pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Fr. Steve is a priest of the Diocese of San Bernardino, and serves at Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Community in Beaumont, California.