

Talk 1. 'What is Lent: Small Group Reflection'

-outline for reflection; for personal prayer, in-person meeting or via zoom—

[Leader] Daily offering prayer: O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

Grace: We ask for the grace to spend this Lent as a “Church on retreat together”, stepping away from the busyness of our lives to be with Christ in the quiet, to be led by the Spirit

[Reader 1] Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11: Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” Then the devil left him, and angels came & attended him.

[Reader 2] Quote: “Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each community and every believer. Above all it is a “time of grace” (2 Cor 6:2). God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. “We love because he first has loved us” (1 Jn 4:19). He is not aloof from us. Each one of us has a place in his heart. He knows us by name, he cares for us and he seeks us out whenever we turn away from him. He is interested in each of us; his love does not allow him to be indifferent to what happens to us.”

Pope Francis [*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2015*]

[Leader] Reflection questions: How can we let ourselves be led by the Spirit this Lent? What do I find most striking about Jesus' experience in the desert? How can we be generous with God this Lent, knowing that he has first been infinitely generous with us? [*All: take 1 min in quiet reflection; 2 min to journal; and then share with the group*]