

1LentA
March 1, 2020
St Bernard Church
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FEEDING ON GOD'S WORD

Satan is clever and deceptive. He tries to tempt human beings when we are weak, when we are vulnerable.

He comes after Jesus in today's Gospel when he thinks Jesus is weak from spending 40 days in the desert without food. He suggests to Jesus that he use His power to turn stones into bread.

What Satan does not understand is the spiritual nourishment that Jesus was feeding on during His time in the desert.

Today's Gospel says that after fasting for 40 days and nights, Jesus was hungry. He wasn't hungry during the time he was in the desert. His prayer time with God the Father was all the nourishment He needed.

In the desert, Jesus was feeding on God's word. As Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy 8, "It is not by bread alone that people live, but by all that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord."

Lent should be a time when we focus on spiritual nourishment, so it's a time we should be feeding on the Word of God.

As the prophet Jeremiah said in Chapter 15:16: "When I found your words, I devoured them; your words were my joy, the happiness of my heart."

The Bible tells us in Hebrews 4:12 that "the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart."

The Word of God is alive, infused with the life and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

It has an objective meaning, binding on all of us, teaching us about God's love, what we can expect from God, what He expects of us and how we are to live.

Jesus uses passages from the Bible to respond to Satan's temptations. We need to do the same. We need to be armed with knowledge of the Bible to learn God's wisdom as opposed to the wisdom of the world.

In Ephesians 6, Saint Paul says we must "put on the armor of God so that we may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil." He concludes his

advice by telling us to “take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

In his homily this past week on Ash Wednesday, Msgr. Gaalaas referred to the spiritual principle that if we’re not growing spiritually, we’re dying spiritually. He concluded by challenging each of us to find ways to grow spiritually during this Lenten season.

I’d like to follow up on Msgr.’s advice by suggesting that, during this Lent, all of us go deeper in our understanding of the Bible.

Most of us here at St. Bernard’s are well educated. Beyond our formal education, many of us have received special training for our jobs. Most of us have been on a learning curve to be able to use modern technology.

With all of the time we have spent on learning, how much of that time has been spent learning the Bible? Have we been intentional in excelling in what we do at work and allowed ourselves to be mediocre Christians?

Jesus came to earth to share His divinity with us, to make available to us His supernatural power and grace. How much of the divinity of Jesus have we taken on? How much of His divine power have we experienced? How much of His grace have we received?

The Bible tells us that we have access to “the surpassing greatness of God’s power.” Have we allowed this power, this grace, to be active in our lives?

Saint Paul pleads with us in 2nd Corinthians 6:1 “not to receive the grace of God in vain.”

The Bible is an amazing resource for helping us appropriate all that God wants to give us.

Suggestions: The Gospel of John; Great Adventure Bible Study

I want to close with one more Bible passage about spiritual nourishment.

Jesus says in the Gospel of John 4:34: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.”

Let this be our food for this Lent. Learning more about God’s will for each of us and all of humanity. Learning more about where God wants to send us. Getting closer to finishing the work God sent us here to do.