

‘OUR LENTEN JOURNEY - OVERCOMING TEMPTATIONS BY ENCOUNTERING JESUS DEEPLY’  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent 2020 ~ 1 March 2020

This weekend the Lenten Letter of Archbishop Mark is available as a handout.  
Let us now read his letter to us. It is also available as a [Facebook video](#)

**MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS THIS LENT**

Let us read from the words of Pope Francis about prayer during this Lent [\[full text\]](#)

*‘Even more than a duty,  
prayer is an expression of our need  
to respond to God’s love  
which always precedes and sustains us.  
Christians pray in the knowledge that,  
although unworthy, we are still loved.*

*Prayer can take any number of different forms,  
but what truly matters in God’s eyes  
is that it penetrates deep within us  
and chips away at our hardness of heart,  
in order to convert us ever more fully to God and to his will.’*

*‘The fact that the Lord once again offers us a favourable time  
for our conversion should never be taken for granted.  
This new opportunity ought to awaken in us  
a sense of gratitude and stir us from our sloth.*

*Despite the sometimes tragic presence of evil in our lives,  
and in the life of the Church and the world,  
this opportunity to change our course expresses God’s unwavering will  
not to interrupt his dialogue of salvation with us.’*

May our prayer penetrate deep within us,  
and chip away at our hardness of heart.

**POPE FRANCIS SOME YEARS AGO ON LENT**

Pope Francis some years ago in his Lenten Letter  
"The Word is a Gift. Other Persons are a Gift"  
spoke of the 40 days of Lent in the following manner:

*“At the basis of everything is the word of God,  
which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply.”*

*“Dear friends, Lent  
is the favourable season for renewing our encounter with Christ,  
living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbour.  
The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter  
during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take.*

*May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion,  
so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word,  
be purified of the sin that blinds us,  
and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need."*

As we encounter Jesus this Lent, may the Holy Spirit lead us

- on our true journey
- in rediscovering the gift of God's Word
- in being cleansed
- and in serving Jesus in our sisters and brothers.

#### **GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 4:1-11**

The three temptations have been called  
a summary of all the temptations that we face.

Let us pause and quietly identify the temptations we currently face in life.

**[Pause]**

Whereas Israel failed time and time again,  
Jesus did not fail.  
Jesus overcame the temptations and gave us hope.

Let us examine the Gospel – Matthew.  
Jesus did not misuse his status.  
Jesus did not abuse by his power.

#### **THE 1ST TEMPTATION**

*"If you are the Son of God, command these stones to turn into bread"*

Jesus responded to the first temptation by quoting:  
***"One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that  
comes from the mouth of God"***

Before us we have a display for our children about the Word  
of God.

For each of today's Readings we highlight the reading's place  
in the Bible.

#### **THE 2ND TEMPTATION: ON THE PINNACLE OF THE TEMPLE**

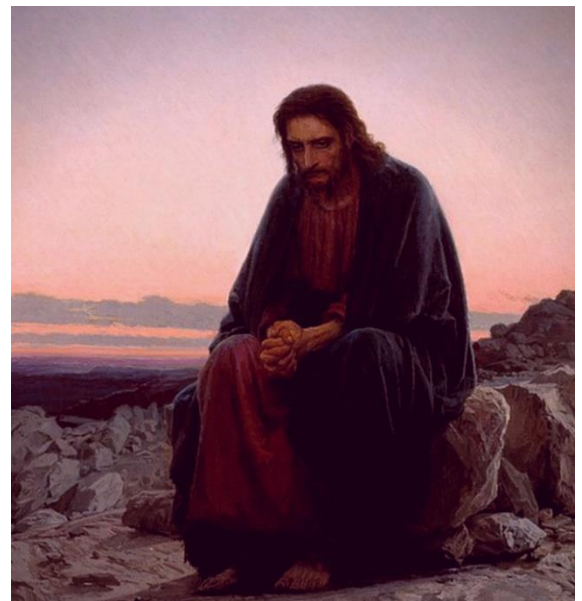
*"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down ..."*

Jesus responded to the second temptation by saying:  
***"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."***

This Lent we ask ourselves in what ways we put God to the  
test.

And we ask God to forgive us.

We focus on how our trust in God can grow.



*Christ in the Desert by Kramskoi*

### THE 3RD TEMPTATION: ON A VERY HIGH MOUNTAIN

*"All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me"*

Jesus responded in two ways to the third temptation by saying:

***"Away with you Satan"***

and by quoting:

***"Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him"***

We serve God.

We do not serve the temptation and inclination to

- injustice,
- intolerance,
- indifference,
- inequality,
- manipulation of power and hatred.
- idolatry,
- worshipping possessions,
- worshipping status
- worshipping people
- worshipping ourselves.

### FORTY DAYS OF LENT

We take the time during this week

- to reflect,
- to dialogue with God,
- to repent and cleanse,
- to pray,
- to renew,
- to put God first once again.

Inspired by today's Gospel, let us

1. live by the Word of God,
2. not test God.
3. worship God alone.

We take the time this Lent

- to cleanse and renew our intentions,
- and to deepen our service of God and our neighbour.

Let us love God deeply.

Let us pray

Fr Gerry

[Readings: <https://universalis.com/Australia/20200301/mass.htm>]