

**First Sunday of Lent C '2019**  
**Duet. 26.4-10///Rom.10.8-13///Luke 4.1-13**

→there once was a man named Paddy (which is short for Patrick) who came from Ireland to Boston.

→in a very short time, he began the practice of going to the local bar after work and ordering three beers...and he wanted them served to him all at once.

→after a few weeks the bartender asked Paddy why he insisted on having all three beers served at the same time.

→Paddy explained that when he lived in Ireland, he and his two brothers every day always got together after work for a beer.

→and he wanted to keep the spirit of their getting together alive even though he now lived in Boston.

→so a few months went by and one day Paddy came in and ordered just two beers...and that continued the next day and the next....

→The bartender, being concerned, asked if something had happened to one of his brothers since he only ordered two beers...

→Paddy answered....no....it's nothing like that...you see its Lent now and I decided to give up beer for Lent...

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Today is the first Sunday of Lent...and every year the Gospel for today, recalls for us our Lord going into the wilderness for 40 days to fast and pray.

--following his baptism....Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit....goes into the desert for 40 days...inspiring us perhaps...to do the same...to make these 40 days a spiritual preparation for Easter through prayer and sacrifice....

→Paddy had the right idea that this is the time of sacrifice...but he certainly wasn't going to overdo it!

→[and] there are an infinite number of things we can do to make these days special...

--our goal can be to give up something such as actions or habits or attitudes that get in our way as we try to love God and others...

→and today we about just such things...in this familiar episode of Jesus being tempted.

→...as we hear...Jesus is in the desert and along the way He is tempted to turn mountains into bread....to seek personal power over his mission...and to test the love of God

→on the surface.....Jesus is being tempted to do what seems to be noble and good

--to feed the hungry....establish freedom...and to be protected by the angels  
--but in reality He is being tempted to do all the **right things** for all the **wrong reasons**...

→and how often is that the same for you and me.

PAUSE

→three different times.....Jesus is tempted.....faced with a choice to make

→for Christ.....the temptations he faced were very real...just like the temptations we face in our lives as well.

→He is first tempted with hunger:

→for Jesus the temptation was real hunger, hunger for food....for you and me.....we also face the temptation of hunger....but it is a hunger that we often feed through wanting an overabundance of material goods and possessions

→a hunger that can be easily satisfied [as well as addictive] especially in a consumer society such as ours

→we live in a world today where we are taught from very early on .....more is better..... the more you have the **better** you are...the more powerful you **can** be....and the more happier you **should** be

→but Jesus resisted the temptation to satisfy his hunger

---and maybe we need to do the same.....to resist our hunger for all the material goods we have been told we need to have in order to be happy

i.o.w.....maybe we don't always need to have the best, and the most, and the biggest

→the second temptation we hear about today is the temptation of power

→for J. the temptation was for a kingdom....for you and me ///// we also are tempted by power.....power over people, the power of wealth, the power of authority

→injustice, racism, prejudice, abuse, control, manipulation are just some of the different ways we use and exert power over others

→...and **power** is very tempting...it was tempting to Christ and it is tempting to you and me even today

→and finally, the third temptation we hear about today is the temptation of the Temple

→Jesus is being tempted to test God and often so are we

→we like to put God to test.....we like to tempt our faith

→And that happens when we attempt to control and determine what God is supposed to do for us rather than what we are supposed to do for God

→"if I pray...God better do this..

→"if I go to Church....I better get this

→"if I'm giving up this for Lent...I better get rewarded

PAUSE

→so you see, the temptations of Jesus are the same ones that you and I face in our lives.....

to do what seems to be the **right thing** for all the **wrong reasons**

→and yet....Jesus resisted his temptations....and you and I are being challenged to do the same.

PAUSE

→Lent is a special time in the Church year for us to deal with the various temptations in our lives.

→a time to reflect on the temptations we face and sins we commit.....but more importantly Lent is a time to change and do something about those temptations...

→today we see Jesus faced with some choices to make

---this season Lent also presents us with some choices to make as well

-----a choice to remain as we are....or *with grace and gladness*....to make changes in our lives so that we might become better people....better Christians....better disciples.

PAUSE

→at the very beginning of his ministry...Jesus was offered the vision of a different path---a path that could lead him to power and riches or betrayal and death and redemption

→this season of Lent also is offering us a different path....

→our 40 days have just begun....

→whatever prayer or sacrifice or good work we may have determined to do during this sacred time, I would bet that one temptation all of us will have (at least I always do) is to say that "40 days is way too long."

→however now is the time for us...with grace and gladness to choose....

→to change....to repent.....to sacrifice and fast

→so that one day ....we might not just enjoy three beers....but eternal life with our Risen Lord.