

Our Lady of Lourdes

First Sunday of Lent

February 21, 2010

Readings:

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Romans 10:8-13

Luke 4:1-13

Fr. Bob

In the desert, that we've just heard mentioned in the Gospel, Jesus was truly tempted to choose a different course. The human part of him would just not give up and tempted him constantly throughout his life. We're told at the end of the reading that the devil left...for a time. And yet, when the time was right, his decision was made, and he proceeded both with fear and with resolve. And he did not reach that point in one single, solitary moment. It did not come to him as one insight that pulled it all together for him. Again, his human part could not be separated. Lent gives us an opportunity once again, to see where we are on our own personal journey when we talk about accompanying Jesus on his journey. Perhaps of all the seasons, this one can be considered to be the most intense. We should not lose ourselves in his story. What Jesus went through, in very dramatic ways, is also what we face in our own lives.

We know suffering, we are confronted with death in many forms and we also know about joy such as the Easter moment. We should connect our lives to what we are seeing and hearing. We bring to Christ's journey to Jerusalem, our own journey to our own destination and fulfillment. But in our lives, in our very human lives, we know that there are times when we have failed to be the people we have been called to be. When we watch the struggles of Christ, we have to do it with an honesty that may cause fear in our lives, because we have to travel with him, who knows our faults and our failures. We can't hide them from the Lord, and that means that we have to admit them.

And watching Christ, if taken with a serious heart, is one that means that we carry with us a cross. We carry our burdens. And that also is a thing that can cause us to want to stop the journey and to go back to some place that we feel is safe and comfortable. Another temptation is to end the journey with Christ because his journey, when connected to our lives, is a fearful thing.

Despite his fear, he was resolved. Because he knew what would be there at the end. In our Gospel, Jesus left the desert knowing what he had to do. He knew that he was in the hands of God.

Listening to Christ, and connecting our lives to him, may seem like a perilous thing. But there is a guarantee. If we bring ourselves along, just as we are, with all of our fears and doubts, if we stick with him, even when things are painful, if we stay with the story, we will find our own fears begin to melt into hope. We will find our doubts diminishing as we begin to find answers.