

Homily – Proyecto Nacional de Hermanas Catolicas

March 10, 2019

In our first reading Moses invites the people of God --- including us – to go to a special place where God dwells. At the offering of the first fruits of the new harvest, Moses tells the people to remember how God gave them their identity and led them from the time of Abraham and Sarah through the slavery in Egypt, and the wandering in the wilderness for forty years, to the Promised Land. This morning we thank God for the many gifts – good people, opportunities, and events -- throughout our life’s journey.

Then led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Jesus into the wilderness where Jesus is tempted by Satan, and tested by his heavenly Father. The wilderness is a desolate place of chaos. Jesus responds to Satan’s temptations by insisting that

- We are to live according to God’s word, not mere bread;
- We are not to try to manipulate or test God;
- We are to walk in God’s ways, not those of the world.

Luke’s gospel tells us that, when he had finished the three temptations, “the devil departed from him *for a time.*” We know that Jesus will eventually be victorious over Satan. However, he will have

to climb Calvary first. There, on the Cross, Jesus will definitively overcome the forces of evil once and for all.

The story of our salvation does not end in the wilderness, but, rather, in the kingdom of God. That kingdom is already among us – whenever people show compassion for one another – wherever people work together for the common good -- -where people reach out to help immigrants who are looking for a safe place to raise their families – where we ensure that children are kept safe from abuse. These are ongoing challenges. We are called to continuing conversion. Our Lenten self-examination should not become bogged down in preoccupation with ourselves, but rather move us on to loving trust in God who delivers us from the bondage of self-absorption. We are to be faithful missionary disciples of the Lord.

During Lent we join Jesus in the wilderness, realizing that we are both tempted by Satan and tested by God. We need not fear. God will not abandon us. God will give us all we need for the journey and will nurture and strengthen our commitment to walk in his ways. We thank God today for his many gifts and ask the risen Lord to accompany us along with the Holy Spirit and Our Lady of Guadalupe who has promised to be with us always.