

## Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish



# Trust in the Lord

Sunday the 22nd of February 2026, First Sunday of Lent, Year A

### **Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11**

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God' he said 'throw yourself down; for scripture says: He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.' Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these' he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

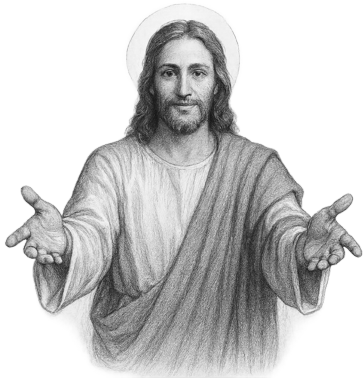
### **Trust in God's Love for You**

Did you notice in today's readings how all the temptations presented by Satan began by trying to cast doubt into the heart of the person being tempted? To Eve, he began with the words "did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?" Then when Eve responds by telling the serpent that they are forbidden from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or else they will die, he tells her that God has lied. Satan makes Eve question God's goodness, convincing her that His command comes from jealousy and not out of love.

Then when he comes to Jesus, he starts with "if You are really the Son of God..." If you remember, this Bible passage comes right after Jesus' Baptism, where God the Father declares that Christ is His "beloved Son." Satan tries to get Jesus to question this identity, by daring Him to prove Himself. Unlike Eve, however, Christ does not lose trust in the Father and refuses to yield Satan's lie.

In the same way, we are called to place our trust in God, to know deeply His love for us. The truth that we are God's beloved children and that He wants what is best for us should be the foundation upon which we build our lives. If we truly trust in this love, then God will become our first priority in all things, and we will be less inclined to give in to temptation.

This is what we are called to in this season of Lent. In our lives, we often push God to the side, prioritizing other things. In Lent, we make sacrifices as a reminder that God is the most important thing, and we need



Him more than we need anything else. We join Jesus in the desert, praying and fasting so as to bring ourselves closer to Him. In doing this we remind ourselves of our dependence on our Creator and throw ourselves into His arms with trust that He will hold us up, even when we cannot stand by ourselves.

Here are some questions for you to reflect on:

- 1. Do I truly believe that God loves me, and wants the best for me?**
- 2. Is having a relationship with God the priority in my life, or are there other things that I treat as more important?**
- 3. What are some things about my life I could change this Lent, to bring my focus back to God (e.g. sacrifices I could make, more time for prayer, ways I can help other people)?**



### ***A message from Pope Francis: The Little Way of Trust and Surrender***



Therese, for her part, wished to highlight the primacy of God's action; she encourages us to have complete confidence as we contemplate the love of Christ poured out to the end. At the heart of her teaching is the realization that, since we are incapable of being certain about ourselves, we cannot be sure of our merits. Hence, it is not possible to trust in our own efforts or achievements. The Catechism chose to quote the words that Saint Therese addressed to the Lord: "I will appear before you with empty hands", in order to express that "the saints have always had a lively awareness that their merits were pure grace". This conviction gives rise to a joyful and tender gratitude.

It is most fitting, then, that we should place heartfelt trust not in ourselves but in the infinite mercy of a God who loves us unconditionally and has already given us everything in the Cross of Jesus Christ. For this reason, Therese never uses the expression, common enough in her day, "I will become a saint".

Even so, her boundless confidence encourages all who feel frail, limited and sinful to let themselves be elevated and transformed in order to reach greater heights. "If all weak and imperfect souls felt what the least of souls feels, that is, the soul of your little Therese, not one would despair of reaching the summit of the mount of love. Jesus does not demand great actions from us, but simply *surrender* and *gratitude*".

*An extract from the Apostolic Exhortation, C'est la Confiance of his Holiness Pope Francis on the 150th anniversary of the birth of St Therese of Lisieux on the 15th of October 2023.*

