

The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, March 1, 2020

TEMPTED



In this Sunday's First Reading, the serpent, the devil, entices the woman to consider the beauty of the tree that she and her husband were forbidden to touch. After the devil's sly words, the woman concludes "that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom." So, she eats of the tree and shares the fruit with her husband. They find the devil's enticement irresistible.

In the Gospel, the devil does the same thing. That is especially evident in the third and final temptation. The devil takes Jesus up a high mountain and shows

him "all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence." He promises all this power and glory can be his, if Jesus just prostrates himself and worships him. Jesus, however, rejects the devil's enticement. He says, "Get away, Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve."

The devil who successfully tempted the man and woman in the garden but failed with Jesus, continues to try and seduce humanity today.

He entices us with attention-grabbing things that can pull us away from God, from the Church, and from our relationships with other members of the human family.

The devil, the clever salesman, is always tempting us to buy what he is selling, for he knows if we do, we will end up just where he wants us, outside the garden with Adam and Eve.

This Lent is the time for us to become more aware of the devil's enticements so that like Jesus we too can say, "Get away, Satan!"

Father John Carlos