

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B

Sunday's gospel (Mark 1:12-15) succinctly reminds us of three fundamental truths we must remember during this Lenten pilgrimage...

1st: In Christ we too do battle with the forces of evil that seek to prevent us from drawing close to God - "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8)

2nd: God gives us everything we need to succeed and sends his angels to minister to us in our need - "If God is for us, who is against us?... neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our LORD" (Romans 8:32, 38-39).

3rd: Like Jesus, our Lenten observance becomes the launch pad for the rest of our lives. It was following his desert trial that Jesus began proclaiming the Good News of Salvation - "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

In this way, at our journey's end, we too will affirm -

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7 - 8).