

On a Journey – Sermon – March 6, 2022 – Lent 1

If I were to say ‘Come on a journey – somewhere warm, where there is no snow!’ What would you say! Would you be excited? All for it, now Covid restrictions are lifting? Or... would you suspect there’s a ‘catch’, that on the first Sunday in Lent, our destination might be the desert. We are going to the desert! Why – to face our demons and to find God. Every Lent we are invited, to a 40 day journey, remembering Our Lord Jesus’ journey into the wilderness for 40 days where he, famished and thirsty, was challenged by the darkness.

The desert has been the place of encounter forever it seems. The Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years. Moses went, John the Baptist too and now Jesus. Filled with the Holy Spirit, he is led by that same Spirit into the wilderness to prepare for ministry. Even though he was without sin, Jesus was tested, confronted by Satan with plausible even tempting proposals. But the desert is a tough place. There is danger, not just from the lack of water and the scorching sun. The desert is where the demons take hold.

The question looms. ‘Why’ was it necessary for Jesus to be tempted.’? It seems he was ‘putting things right’. He was placing himself at the head, which is what recapitulate means. Recapitulate means to put the head back on. He is the head we are the body.

Jesus recapitulates the whole of human experience, placing the Divine over all.

I am going to show you this little video to explain.

<https://youtu.be/-OISAeldaiE>

Jesus can be seen as the ‘new Adam’. As in the example in the video, Jesus is the new host, replacing the old one, Adam who succumbed to temptation in the Garden. Now when Jesus is tempted by Satan...he is human, he IS tempted, but Jesus does not succumb.

Jesus meets each of Satan’s propositions with scripture pointing back to God. He says ‘This is not about me, it’s about God.’ We all have them, demons,... the dark persuasive voices, making questionable desires so inviting and attractive, rationalizing these suspect motivations. **We** are human and so, imperfect and so very vulnerable at times. We can wonder what inner encounters go on for

President Putin, Donald Trump, the Pope and Vladimyr Valensky. But our Lord in this temptation scenario passes the test. He is human, he is tempted but he does not waver. He points each time back to his Father, the Divine Creator. This is not about me, it is about the good of all. He rewrites the story, there is a new 'head'. This time temptation did not win! Later on, when it comes to it, death will not win either!

So famished and thirsty, our Lord passes the test in the desert. He passes it for us all. He is taking his place at the head. Now at the beginning of Lent, the desert time, when we remember we are dust and to dust we shall return, we can only wonder at this amazing happening...that God should become flesh...and intervene for us. That we can be baptized into him, that we can through his body and blood, dwell in him and he in us. We give thanks. Amen.