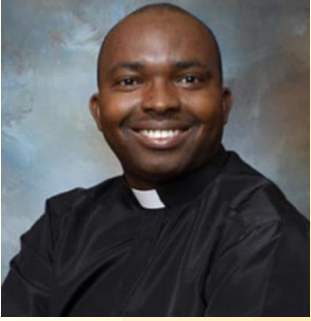


## Homily Rerun: March 5, 2017 - Fr Seno



My dear friends in Christ, “nobody is above temptation.” The temptations to which our Lord allowed Himself to be submitted are for us a source of encouragement and consolation. If our Lord and Master underwent temptations, we cannot and must not expect to live a life without experiencing similar tests and trials. As a matter of fact, most of us will be tempted many times over in our lifetime. Now, the question is, “What do we do, if and when we are tempted?” How do we cope with temptation?

There are three possible ways of dealing with temptation, any temptation. The first is to say “Yes”, and give in to the temptation. If we do that, then we shall commit sin; and that is the last thing God wants us to do. Unfortunately, a lot of people do that, and are doing it all the time.

The second way of dealing with temptation is to do nothing about it. Just leave it alone, and it will go away. But temptations does not go away just like that. Not to do anything about it is nearly as bad as giving in to it. As a matter of fact, not to do anything about a temptation is to be guilty of a sin of omission, at the very least.

The third way of dealing with temptation is to “perish the thought”; that is, to say “No” to it as soon as it creeps into our mind. That was the response of Jesus, as we learn from the Gospel passage today. And it is one of the lessons that He teaches us today. Jesus did not give any quarters to Satan. He told Satan where to get off on each occasion that He was tempted. His response was prompt, unequivocal. There was no ambiguity about it. Satan knew exactly what Jesus meant.

That is how we too must deal with the temptations that will most certainly come into our minds. We are not to entertain them or even enter into any argument or debate with them. We are not to play host to them even for a moment longer than necessary.

My dear friends, remember that we cannot deal with temptation all by ourselves. We shall always need the help of God. Left to ourselves, we are no match for Satan. He will crush us and grind us into powder. The Apostles Paul says that much in Ephesians 6:12 -17: “For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armor of God that you may be able to resist on the evil day and having done everything,... And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”

The devil tempts us today to adore the idols of pleasure, power and money. Some become addicted to drugs, sex and laziness. Who will liberate them from the devil’s grip? Christ is our model, and the Christian life consists in imitating Him. By prayer, fasting and penance Jesus got new spiritual strength to overcome evil. We are also reminded that we should do penance, fast and pray to overcome temptation: temptations to be egocentric, temptations to discard others.

Temptations can bring a service to us. It may be a burden, but it can bring us humility and teach us good lessons. All of the saints experienced their share of temptations and trials and they grew as a result.

My dear friends, with God on our side, Satan can only depart defeated, as he did in the case of Jesus. The devil has no chance with God. That is why we pray, “Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from Evil One.”