

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



Today's Readings:

Created by God. Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7
Christ offers life. Rom 5:12-19
Jesus and the tempter. Mt 4:1-11

Next Week:

The transfiguration.
Gn 12:1-4; 2 Tm 1:8-10;
Mt 17:1-9

In a nutshell

The temptation to give in to social pressures and to pursue fame, wealth and power was familiar to Jesus, just as it is to us. Today's Gospel tells of Jesus' victorious resistance in the face of the devil's destructive bargains. Fortified by our relationship with Christ, may we, too, persevere along the path of life.



Struggle in the wilderness

Families have their fair share of struggles in the 'wilderness' of contemporary living with all its pressures and temptations.

Peer pressure

Right now our family is hard work. We have three great kids but life with them is challenging for my husband and myself. Our girls are very capable and usually see logic, but these teen years and peer pressure has seen a change. They are snappy and anything I say is criticised. Alcohol and drugs are a concern. We talk often about this, but I'm getting mixed messages. Our household can be extremely stressed.

My husband and I work hard to diffuse situations but I too contribute to explosions. We know things will get better. We keep aiming for that time. We've got great kids, they'll come through in the end. We believe they have a lot to offer this world. This is just a difficult time. I remember when I was a teenager it was not easy.

Work stress

My husband has a lot of stress at work (he is a policeman). He finds it depressing that so many young people lack direction and often no one seems to care for them. Morale is low among his workmates and he often wishes he chose a different career or a trade. But he enjoys his kids and family is number one for him.

Source: *In Their Own Words*. (Bishops' Committee for Family and for Life, 2000).

Think: What struggle is currently part of your life?

Today's Gospel highlights the call to make tough choices for God, for fullness of life. Like the man in the following story:

The choice

In his prime he had been a man of fine physique. But now he lived as an invalid. He had worked on a remote mine site where he was caught in a massive explosion. For some considerable time his wife had cared for him. But eventually she found it too much. She left him. 'I forgave her,' he said. And it was obvious that he remained forgiving. (PK)

Think . Talk

Amidst the complexities of your unique situation:

- What choices present themselves?
- In order to be free to make the most lifegiving choice, in what way might you need to be healed?
- In what way might you need to seek forgiveness?



Four tips for resisting temptation

1. Focus on the positive reason for resisting a temptation; i.e. the positive value you wish to live by, the kind of person you want to become.
2. Pray for strength and resolve.
3. If possible, remove yourself from the tempting environment and seek out a supportive one.
4. Take a step towards addressing the root problem; i.e. why are you susceptible to this temptation? What aspect of your life needs healing?



RealPeople offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.

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