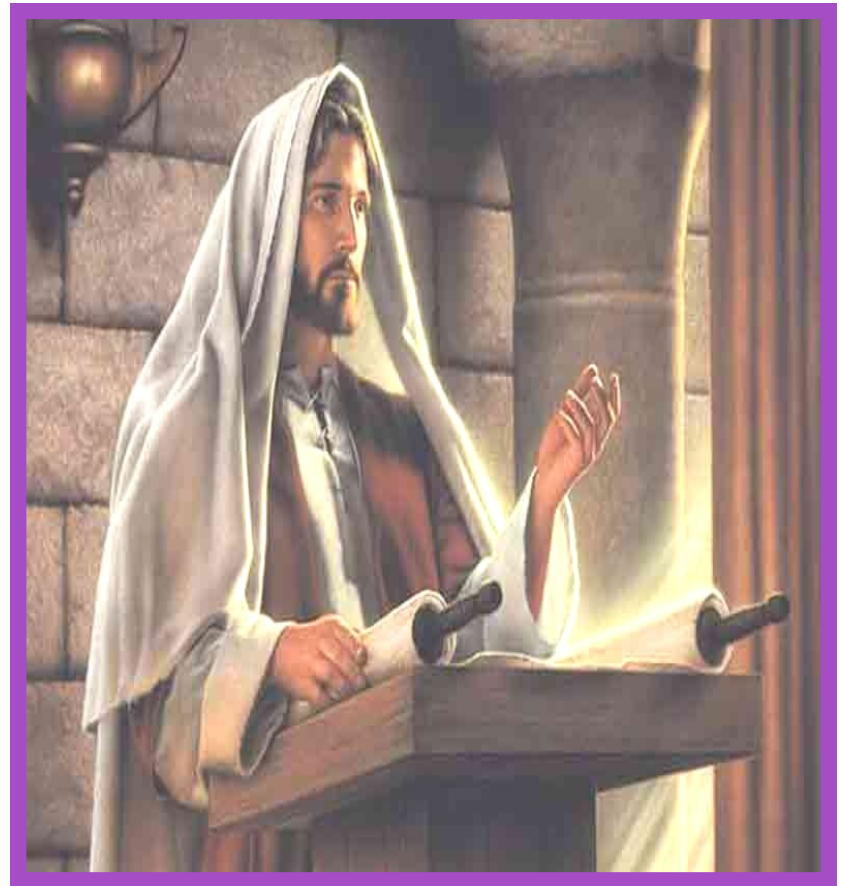


6. That by His temptation as an example, He might overcome our temptations, and might teach us to fight with and overcome the same antagonist. For although the faithful, conscious of their own infirmity, ought to avoid temptations as far as they can, according to the words of Christ, "Lead us not into temptation," yet when temptations do come, they must, relying upon Christ, valiantly resist them, remembering His words; "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Whence Saint Augustine on Psalm XC. says, "Therefore was Christ tempted, that the Christian might not be overcome by the tempter." For as Saint Ambrose says, "When thou art tempted, recognize that a crown is being prepared for thee. Take away the contests of the martyrs, you take away their crowns. Take away their torments, you take away their beatitudes. Is not the temptation of Joseph the celebration of his virtue? Is not the wrong of his prison the crown of his chastity?"



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**SERMON ON
THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
142-2**



JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

From: THE GREAT COMMENTARY OF CORNELIUS A LAPIDE

S. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.—CHAPS. I. TO IX.

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That he might be tempted by the devil. The word does not signify that the Holy Ghost directly intended that the devil's temptation should assail Christ, for that would be an evil thing: but only that the temptation should be permitted for the sake of Christ's profit and victory, which He surely foresaw, and so opposed Christ, as it were an athlete, to the devil.

1. In the first place, the Holy Spirit intended by this temptation to afford to Christians, baptized and converted to God, an ideal of religious life, whereby they should know they must fortify themselves against the temptations which are sure to attack them. So, as Saints Chrysostom and Hilary, and as Tertullian teaches, that it is here signified, that no one without temptation shall attain the Kingdom of God.

2. The Holy Ghost would show that there is no temptation which may not be overcome by grace, by prayer and fasting, by repeating the words of Scripture, the precepts and promises of God.

3. Christ, who was often tempted by Satan, thus showed Himself to be like unto all other men, His brethren, as the Apostle teaches, Heb. iv. 15.

4. That He might show that those who are about to become doctors, preachers, prelates, apostles, must need to be first proved by temptations, and be strengthened by prayer and meditation in solitary retreats, and there drink in a large supply of the Spirit, which they may afterwards pour forth upon others. They who be wise, first go apart with Christ into the wilderness of prayer and meditation.

5. That challenging Lucifer to battle, He might vanquish him, and his whole army of demons with him. This duel between Christ and that when the sun struggles with the surrounding clouds, with this motto, "Splendor is from me." "For the sun," as Saint Ambrose says, "is the eye of the world, the pleasantness of day, the beauty of the heaven, the measure of seasons, the strength and vigor of all the stars. As the sun dissipates the clouds, so does Christ all the temptations of the devil." And again, "As the sun makes brilliant the darkest clouds, so does Christ, by the splendor of His grace, convert desolation into consolation, temptations into victories, war into triumph."

