

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Mark (*Mark 14:38*)

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ Win Many Daily Battles for the Lord

Recognising temptation. The Deceiver is highly intelligent and uses a great range of tricks to trip up souls and bring them to eternal damnation. He never sleeps and is constantly undermining what God is building in souls. Because He camouflages evil under good appearances, undiscerning souls are easily deceived. Some of his tricks are well known e.g. promoting abortion under the pretext of right of choice for women; women priests under equal rights for women, etc. Recognising temptation for what it is can be half the battle won. What is needed is a well-formed conscience. *Teach me, Lord, the way of Your decrees, that I may follow it to the end (Psalm 119:33).*

Undermining of the Faith. The Devil tries to undermine our faith by distracting our attention and channeling our limited time into earthly things and activities that bear no reference to our sanctification. It could be a harmful or harmless activity. However, the result is the same – it eats into our limited time that can be used to build up our faith. And so the average person is tied up with endless activities. The Evil One is feeding a culture of noise and useless activity. People are not comfortable with silence. In trains or in restaurants, ears are plugged into portable music, fingers are busy working the latest i-phone, etc. As true disciples of the Lord, we are accountable for how we spend our time on earth. Preoccupation with mindless things fritters away our precious time and produces emptiness in the heart. *Be still, and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10).*

Endless pursuit of money. Satan's prey on feelings of insecurity. Money is a powerful god for masses and masses of people. It occupies the top priority of the lives of many people and motivates all kinds of behaviour to get more and more of it. Money is the root of much evil. In the world of today, material wealth is equated with happiness and success in life. Without a strong prayer life, we can be swept into the never ending pursuit of money and material goods for security and comfort in life. As Jesus has warned us, we cannot serve God and money (cf. Luke 16:13). Our security is in the Lord who is everlasting. Material wealth comes with heavy responsibility. *How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! (Luke 18:24).*

Discouragement and fear. We fall many times a day into temptation, many times without knowing it. When the fall is sufficiently big, we may face a lot of discouragement and the internal pressure to give up is very great. Discouragement is the greatest obstacle to growth in personal holiness. We need a lot of self-control, faith and trust in God to master and overcome our feelings. Bearing in mind the infinite mercy and patience of God, we can pick ourselves up after every fall from grace and persist in our attempts to live and witness to our faith. The Lord is waiting patiently at the Confessional to fill our souls again with sanctifying grace.

Pride is the easiest way Satan gets into our hearts. Pride is a secret attitude of the heart that is manifested through words and actions. Satan puts suggestions into our minds telling us we are better, holier, more responsible, more humble and doing well spiritually compared to others. Such a one accepting these suggestions may even have a humble external appearance. Without humility, there is little foundation for the development of the other virtues. It stands us in good stead to pray for humility and practise it often, always reminding ourselves all our gifts are from the Lord.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I know that I have to be vigilant always as the devil prowls like a hungry lion around me. Help me develop a strong prayer life. Through the trials You sent me, strengthen and deepen my faith and trust in You that I may never give way to discouragement. Purify my mind and heart and fill it with Your love so that holy love will be my protection against temptation. Help me develop humility so that my heart will not be open to any of Satan's suggestions. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, protect me with Your maternal mantle. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.