

Fr. Glenn's Pen

Lent is upon us! We are invited to enter into a 40 day retreat of sorts. We are called to deny ourselves so that we can remember that we truly must rely on God. In the first reading we see how the people are instructed to share what they have. Paul reminds us that the Lord is near and that all who truly believe will have the grace necessary to be saved. We must persevere. In the Gospel we hear the account of Jesus' temptations after forty days of fasting.

There is a famous depiction in the novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, concerning the Grand Inquisitor and Jesus and His return in the middle ages. The inquisitor is portrayed as a man with little faith and sees religion as the means to control the people. In the story Jesus returns and is healing many people and causing a great deal of excitement in the town. Control is being threatened and thus the inquisitor calls Jesus in for questioning. The inquisitor suspects that Jesus has really come back and begins to accost Him. He charges that society would have been better off if he took the devil up on his temptations. He claimed that if he could make bread for everyone, the people would be better off. If Jesus took political power, then you could stamp out all injustice. And if only He would have shown people that He was invincible, all would cower at His power. The inquisitor goes off on some tirade charging Jesus that He was only concerned with preserving freedom and not control. The inquisitor claims that such liberty is too dangerous, it opens the door for too much human suffering. He tells Jesus that He should burn Him at the stake tomorrow! Jesus looks at him with love, kisses him. The frustrated inquisitor says, "Get out!".

Freedom comes at such a price! It is only through freedom that we can choose to be like God. We choose not to be mastered by our instincts but choose love instead of hate, virtue instead of vice; this is so God's loving presence is revealed in those who are striving to be one with Him. May this be our best Lent ever! May we deny ourselves so that Christ will be more present in what we say and do! May we experience a real Metanoia, a transformation - May we repent and believe the Good News, and may we truly be instrumental in guiding families to pursue the truth and live it! (starting first and foremost with our own families)