

Season of Septuagesima

February 24, 2019

The devils try to tempt us to all and every sin, but this is particularly the case for those striving after perfection. If someone is always giving in to the maxims of the world (more later on this) or just giving into temptations of our fallen human nature, chances are the devil is leaving that person alone. He already has him and he is going to concentrate on others who are striving after perfection. The devil is cunning and has a lot of experience and so we must be on guard. We resist the devil through our faithful and fervent prayers, and particularly with the sign of the Cross and holy water. The devil can only do things to us that God permits, and God will only permit things that we can use for our sanctification.

The second enemy to contend with is the world. There are maxims that the worldly live by. Here is a short list, though more can be added: 1. Earthly pleasure is man's true happiness; 2. We must have wealth and comfort at any price; 3. When we are injured by someone, we must get even; 4. Poverty is to be despised; 5. A good standard of living is to be the rule for judging people (quality of life).

We can see how this list will quickly lead those who follow it away from a life of virtue and sacrifice to one of self-centeredness. The worldly seek after the company of those who love vanities, riches and pleasures more than God. These maxims are of course false and opposed to God and to the gospel. However, it is sometimes easy for us to get drawn into them since they are not usually presented so blatantly as I have presented them. This is where we must be careful to examine ourselves carefully to see what our real motives are. Most of the time there are mixed motives, where the primary one is good, but the secondary ones tend not to be so good. We often tend to flatter our ego, even while trying to serve God. We can overcome these things, through a regular examination of conscience, having a contempt for worldly customs and growing in moral courage; that is, by prayer and frequent use of the sacraments.

*Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP
Pastor, Regina Caeli Parish*