

Jesus † Mary † Joseph
Chapter 44 - Temptations Come to All

Christ:

My child, the devil is never asleep, nor is your flesh dead yet. This means that you must always be on guard for a battle, since on every side you have enemies who are never at rest. Your old enemy is opposed to everything that is good. He is never tired of tempting people to sin. Day and night he lays snares, with the hope that some unsuspecting soul may fall into his trap. Be on your guard against temptations. Pray often for the grace to overcome them.

2. No man is entirely safe from temptations here on earth. You have within you the source of temptation, since you were born with concupiscence. Concupiscence of the body is the blind tendency of your feelings and animal appetites to seek satisfaction, regardless of intelligence and reason. Concupiscence of the soul consist in an unreasoning and unreasonable self-favoring, without considering what is true or what is right.

3. When one temptation or trouble is over, along comes another. While you are on this earth you will always have something to suffer, because man has lost the original happiness which I had planned to give him even in this world.

Think:

Every man gets his share of temptations. How he deals with them shows what he really is. If he tries his best to lessen the occasions for temptation in his daily life, he is a wise man. The fool takes chances with temptations and falls into sin. Man's greatest enemy is his spontaneous, unreasoning self. The devil's greatest ally against my true welfare, is this foolish self within me. He appeals to it by promising or offering what looks good. If I know God's way of thinking, I shall recognize Satan's bait, and with God's help, I shall control my unreasoning desires and foolish self-favoring.

Pray:

My loving Father and all-wise God, I long to reflect Thy holy honesty by recognizing myself for what I really am. Let me not be blind to my weaknesses and faults. I do not want to favor myself except in the highest way – that is, I want to win eternal life for myself by following Thy holy commands in my daily life. I wish to avoid or contradict whatever endangers my eternal salvation. In fact, I desire to practice self-control and self-mortification so as to gain a greater command over my blind passions and unreasonable self-favoring. Only with such control, can I hope to overcome the many temptations, big or small, which daily come to me. Amen.

December 14th

Saint Nicasius and his Companions, Martyrs (†5th century)

In the fifth century an army of Vandal barbarians from Germany, while ravaging part of Gaul, plundered the city of Rheims. Nicasius, its holy bishop, an emissary of peace, justice, and charity, had foretold this calamity to his flock; for the city of Rheims, which for a long time had been docile to his word, little by little was seen by the afflicted pastor

to be sinking into vice and corruption. He endeavored to waken them to penance: “Weep, lament in sackcloth and ashes, unfortunate flock, for God has numbered your iniquities, and if you do not do penance, dreadful punishments are going to come upon you!” But his words were unheeded.

When Saint Nicasius saw the enemy at the gates and in the streets, forgetting himself and solicitous only for his spiritual children, he went from door to door encouraging everyone to patience and constancy, and awakening in each breast the most heroic sentiments of piety and religion. By endeavoring to save the lives of his flock, he exposed himself to the sword of the infidels, who indeed slew him, while he was praying on his knees the words of a Psalm: “Lord, my soul has been as though fastened to the earth; Lord, give me life, according to Your word!” Florens, his deacon, and Jocond, his lector, were massacred by his side. His sister Eutropia, a virtuous and beautiful virgin, fearing she might be reserved for a fate worse than death, boldly cried out to the infidels that it was her unalterable resolution to sacrifice her life rather than her faith or her virtue. In reply, they dispatched her with their cutlasses, and continued their massacre.

Then, suddenly, a strange and terrible noise was heard in the Church of Notre-Dame, and the alarmed barbarians took flight without taking time to pillage the houses or burn the city, or even take the booty they had already amassed.

When the city’s inhabitants who had fled to the mountains of the region felt it was safe to return, having seen an unexplained flame above the place of the torment and heard what seemed to be an angelic concert in that area, they went with the intention of piously burying the remains of the slain, and they found there Saint Nicasius, their bishop, his assistants, and Saint Eutropia. Many miracles occurred at their tomb.

Sources: Little Pictorial Lives of the Saints, a compilation based on Butler’s Lives of the Saints and other sources, by John Gilmary Shea (Benziger Brothers: New York, 1894); Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 14.

Preparing the Stable - December 14th - Light

See that the crib has sufficient light. Be neat and orderly about your person, keep everything in its place in your room.

Ejaculation: Jesus, be the life and light of my soul.

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