

SUNDAY PLUS

Something more...

Not on bread alone

by Sr Siobhán O'Keeffe
SSHJM

We have been baptised into a relationship of love. We desire to grow closer to him during this holy season of Lent.

The people in the desert suffered greatly; however God led them through a wilderness of anguish because they trusted wholeheartedly in God. Out of their nothingness, a benevolent God brought their lives to a new and richer fulfilment – and they gave glory to God for his care.

In the person of Jesus we see where his spirit was sorely tested by Satan in the desert. Satan preyed on Christ's vulnerability when he prayed and fasted so that he could grow closer to his Father and discern his mission

more deeply. Christ kept his focus on the Father and on God's will and was not distracted by the wiles of the Evil One. Jesus' food was to do the will of the Father and not succumb to the temptations of the world.

By his example, we know that God's Spirit is with us during our times of trial if we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and draw life from the scriptures, the Eucharist and the laws of God. If we draw away from these life-giving gifts we will succumb to the Evil One and break the heart of God.

We recommit ourselves to living on the word and bread of life so that in Jesus we may come to fullness of life and give glory to the God of all life and love.

Sr Siobhán O'Keeffe is a Sister of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.



It takes love

by Claire Wright

I don't know about you, but if I had been in the desert for forty days without food, I would be starving! It never ceases to amaze me that Jesus can resist food at this stage. In his completely human body, everything would have been aching painfully and his body would have been begging him for food in any form.

But Jesus knew, with his whole being – body and soul – that while God has given us a lot of pleasure and satisfaction in the gift of food,

we don't just need to nourish our bodies. We need to nourish our souls, too. Our body and soul are just as important and intertwined as Jesus' was in the desert and starving ourselves spiritually is just as damaging to us as creations of God as physical starvation.

Our self, our relationships, our family life, our well-being, take more than just a plate of tempting food. They take prayer, generosity, surrender and community. They take love. They take God.

Claire Wright is a Brighton-based freelance writer who runs a faith blog and a healthy family food website, all while taking care of two lively toddlers.

Feed the heart and soul

by Des Kelly

Scripture says, human beings do "not live by bread alone". Besides the obvious meaning, "bread" can mean material things in general. Imagine parents who feed their children and give them only material things but never speak words of encouragement, affirmation, guidance, or a word of welcome, peace, love and joy. The child's body would be nourished yet the child's heart and soul would be empty because it's not just the human body that gets hungry; the human heart and human spirit get hungry too. It is not that people deny the spiritual but that they can neglect it. As parents we give our children roots and wings – roots in love and Gospel values and wings

of courage to fly out into the world secure in our love and God's. Jesus gave people material things but said they would never satisfy people fully. He came to nourish people's minds and hearts with the word of God.

Since Des Kelly retired from full-time education, he has led various missions and staff inset days in many parishes and schools across both Westminster and Brentwood Dioceses.

Lord, it's Lent again. Help me to use these days properly so that I can come closer to you + Amen.

"Think of your own history when you pray, and there you will find much mercy. This will also increase your awareness that the Lord is ever mindful of you; he never forgets you. So it makes sense to ask him to shed light on the smallest details of your life, for he sees them all."

Pope Francis

Today:
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

Monday:
Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18
Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday:
Isaiah 55:10-11
Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday:
Jonah 3:1-10
Luke 11:29-32

Thursday:
Esther 4:17
Matthew 7:7-12

Friday:
Ezekiel 18:21-28
Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday:
Deuteronomy 26:16-19
Matthew 5:43-48

Next Sunday:
Genesis 15:5-12, 17-19
Philippians 3:17 - 4:1
Luke 9:28-36