



Peace & Joy
Romans 5: 1-5

2010 Lenten Meditations

Written by Parishioners of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral / Compiled by The Daughters of the Holy Cross

Masthead courtesy of Susan Craig

Sunday, February 21 **Luke 4:1-3**

Following His baptism, Jesus spent forty days in the desert, hungry and tempted. He was filled with and led by the Holy Spirit. In facing His wilderness, Jesus didn't complain of hunger and thirst, unlike His complaining ancestors. He humbly relied on God's will and was obedient. As a part of His preparation for becoming the Savior, Jesus spent this time focusing on His spirituality and faith in God.

Toward the end of the forty days, Jesus confronted doubt, and refused to be coerced into doing something that would deter His purpose as God's beloved son. Deprivation has a way of revealing what lies deepest in our hearts. We are regularly tempted today. Too often we rationalize giving into temptation without considering or giving credence to the consequences of our actions. Yes, God will forgive us because Jesus died for us, and because we ask, but perhaps the pain of succumbing to temptation may be avoided if we live more like Jesus. In *An introduction to the Episcopal Church*, J.B. Bernardin writes "Sin is the conscious choosing of the worse of two alternatives, disobedience to the will of God, the failure to rise to the possibilities within one. Sin erects a barrier between us and God and hinders the free and full communication with him in prayer."

Faith, patience and hope help us overcome our own exhausting walks through the wilderness. God wants us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and resist temptation as Jesus did. Even though we go through the struggles of life, living with the Holy Spirit can help us continue on that path. M. Scott Peck, MD, wrote "[b]ut the capacity to rise above temptation is the essence of freedom."

"Let us all more and more mature to that wisdom which, looking beyond the void, sees and loves only the eternal in all things earthly and perishable, and in all thy decrees finds thy peace as well, and eternal life, to which through faith we are delivered out of death. Amen." (L.D. Johnson)

Mary Ellen Haile Saxon

Mary Ellen is a lifelong member of Trinity and serves on the New Life Ministries Committee. She is married to Jamie and they have two children, Charlie and Boykin.