

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

In last week's bulletin we ran the first part of a two part article dealing with temptation. Below is the second part of the article. It is taken from the book: **The Purpose Driven Life** by Rick Warren (2002). Pastor Warren is not a Catholic and he doesn't really understand the importance of the sacraments, but he has written an excellent book about living the Christian life.

With my prayers,
Fr. Conley

Understanding how temptation works is in itself helpful, but there are specific steps you need to take to overcome it.

Refuse to be intimidated. Many Christians are frightened and demoralized by tempting thoughts, guilty feelings that they aren't "beyond" temptation. They feel ashamed just for being tempted. This is a misunderstanding of maturity. You will never outgrow temptation.

In one sense you can consider temptation a compliment. Satan does not have to tempt those who are already doing his evil will; they are already his. Temptation is a sign that Satan hates you, not a sign of weakness or worldliness. It is also a normal part of being human and living in a fallen world. Don't be surprised or shocked or discouraged by it. Be realistic about the inevitability of temptation; you will never be able to avoid it completely. The Bible says, "When you're tempted..."not if. Paul advises, "Remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience."

It is not a sin to be tempted. Jesus was tempted, yet he never sinned. Temptation only becomes a sin when you give in to it. You can't keep the Devil from suggesting thoughts, but you can choose not to dwell or act on them.

For example, many people don't know the difference between physical attraction or sexual arousal, and lust. They are not the same. God made every one of us a sexual being, and that is good. Attraction and arousal are the natural, spontaneous, God-given responses to physical beauty, while lust is a deliberate act of the will. Attraction is not lust until you begin to dwell on it.

Actually, the closer you grow to God, the more Satan will try to tempt you. The moment you became God's child, Satan, like a mobster to his man, put out a "contract" on you. You are his enemy, and he's plotting your downfall.

Sometimes while you are praying, Satan will suggest a bizarre or evil thought just to distract you and shame you. Don't be alarmed or ashamed by this, but realize that Satan fears your prayers, and will try anything to stop them. Instead of condemning yourself with "How

could I think such a thought?" treat it as a distraction from Satan and immediately refocus on God.

Recognize your pattern of temptation and be prepared for it.

There are certain situations that make you more vulnerable to temptation than others. Some circumstances will cause you to stumble almost immediately, while others don't bother you much. These situations are unique to your weaknesses, and you need to identify them because Satan surely knows them! He knows exactly what trips you up, and he is constantly working to get you into those circumstances. Peter warns, "Stay alert. The Devil is poised to pounce, and would like nothing better than to catch you napping." Ask yourself, "When am I most tempted? What day of the week? What time of day?" Ask, "Where am I most tempted? At work? At home? At a neighbor's house? At a sports bar? In an airport or motel out of town? Ask, "Who is with me when I'm most tempted? Friends? Co-workers? A crowd of strangers? When I'm alone?" Also ask, "How do I usually feel when I am most tempted?" It may be when you are tired or lonely or bored or depressed or under stress. It may be when you have been hurt or angry or worried, or after a big success or spiritual high.

You should identify your typical pattern of temptation and then prepare to avoid those situations as much as possible. The Bible tells us repeatedly to anticipate and be ready to face temptation. Paul said, "Don't give the Devil a chance."

Ask God's Help. God wants you to ask him for assistance in overcoming temptation. He says, "Call on me in times of trouble. I will rescue you, and you will honor me."

When temptation strikes, you simply cry out. Daniel, Peter, Paul and millions of others have prayed this kind of instant prayer for help in trouble.

The Bible guarantees that our cry for help will be heard because Jesus is sympathetic to our struggle. He faced the same temptations we do. He "understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin."

If God is waiting to help us defeat temptation, why don't we turn to him more often? Honestly, sometimes we don't want to be helped! We want to give in to temptation even though we know it's wrong. At that moment we think we know what's best for us more than God does.

God's love is everlasting, and his patience endures forever. If you have to cry out for God's help two hundred times a day to defeat a particular temptation, he will still be eager to give mercy and grace, so come boldly. Ask him for the power to do the right thing and then expect him to provide it.

Temptations keep us dependent upon God. Just as the roots grow stronger when wind blows against a tree, so

every time you stand up to a temptation you become more like Jesus. When you stumble-which you will - it is not fatal. Instead of giving in or giving up, look up to God, expect him to help you, and remember the reward that is waiting for you: "When people are tempted and still continue strong, they should be happy. After they have proved their faith, God will reward them with life forever."

Remember "**God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.**"
JAMES 1:12

Mark Your Calendar for our Parish Mission which will be held from Monday through Wednesday, April 1-April 3. The evening sessions will be from 7 to 8:30 PM. Sessions will also be held in the morning from 11 until 12 noon. Our mission presenter will be **Dr. Mark Nimo**. Mark Kwaku Nimo comes from Ghana in West Africa. He is married to Mercy and has three daughters. Mark earned a Masters in Pastoral Studies from Catholic Theological Union in May, 2006 and an Ecumenical Doctor of Ministry in May 2012. He currently serves as Director of Faith Formation at St. Columbanus Church in Chicago. Mark is a gifted speaker and has ministered in over forty countries worldwide.

We will have a praise and worship gathering this Thursday from 6:30 to 8:30 and dinner will be served. Everyone is invited to come and join us for Spirit-filled praise of our Lord. For more information contact Fr. Conley.

JOB OPENING - St. Mary's Bryantown School has a job opening for a maintenance person. The job hours are 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Duties include general cleaning and vacuuming, trash collection, main hall set up, as well as seasonal work such as summer building maintenance, grounds maintenance. Capable of lifting 50 lbs. Ability to pass Federal/State fingerprinting and background checks, ADW background check, and attend the ADW Protecting God's Children class. Please submit your application and resume with a letter of interest to Sharon Caniglia, Principal at St. Mary's School. Please call (301) 932- 6883 for more information.

2019 ANNUAL JUBILARIAN MASS

The annual Jubilarian Mass honoring couples married 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, and 51 + years will be held on Sunday, June 23, 2019 at 2:00 PM at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Please use the sign-up form in the back of church to register, and return the form to the rectory office to Mary, no later than Monday, April 22, 2019.

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad will be holding a **Drive-Thru Chicken Dinner on Sunday, March 24**, at the Hughesville Firehouse from 11:30am – 2:30 pm or until sold out. No tickets will be sold in advance. Menu: 4 pieces of Fried Chicken, green beans, parsley potatoes, apple sauce, roll, bottle water. Cost is \$14 each.

CONGRATULATIONS RAFFLE WINNERS:

1/31/19 – Patrick Brewer of Hughesville, \$4500 & Stephanie Girard of La Plata, \$1000,
2/2/19 – Theresa Keyes of Hughesville & Nicole Vinciguerra of Waldorf, \$1000 each,
2/12/19 – Owen Day of Waldorf, & Liz Rand of Waldorf, \$1000 each,
2/14/19 – Charles & Linda DeCola of La Plata, & Meggan Barker of Hughesville, \$1000 each,
3/1/19 – Wendy Windsor & Jose Solorzano of Upper Marlboro, \$4500, Shannon O'Steen of Hollywood, \$4500 & Elias Damo of Waldorf, \$20,000.

The **IGNITE YOUTH** would like to invite all middle and high school students to attend an Opioid and K-9 Presentation being held on Friday, April 5th at 6:30 pm, presented by St Mary's Co Sheriff's Department. The Opioid overdose epidemic in Maryland is rising and we all need to be made more aware of this tragic issue. If you need more information please contact Karen Krechman - karen.krechman@gmail.com

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Parishioners, 10am Edwin W. Bowling, 12N: Mary Jane Hicks, **MON:** 8am John A. Wade, **TUES:** 8am Mildred Wood, **WED:** 8am Barbara Crumrine, **THURS:** 8am James S. Neal, **FRI:** 9:30am Maurice Long, Sr., 7pm Rev. Joseph Kleinstuber, **SAT:** 9am Ernest J. Keller, Jr., 4pm Allan & Lucille Stonestreet.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Stephen Balenger, Mary Bowes, Deacon Gene Burroughs, Quint Burroughs, Brenda Callahan, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Kevin Gardiner, Martha Gehring, James Gibson, Zynae Green, Irma Johnson, Angie Kalnasy, Regina Kijesky, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Mary Emma Middleton, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Mary Reeves, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Jean Turner, Eva Washington, Beth Weise, Pat Werner, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND: \$9,156.00. The unidentified donations totaled \$616.00. We received \$204.00 for our School Support.