

Homily

1st Sunday Lent (C)

10 March 2019

"If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf of bread." This is a challenge to all of us! Which is more important to us, food and drink, satisfying our hunger, or being with God?

A pint of beer down at the pub, a nice glass of wine, a slap-up meal, or a time of prayer and meditation? There's nothing wrong with a pint of beer down at the pub or a slap-up meal, but which is actually more important to us, eating and drinking, or being with the Lord?

"I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms."

Again, which is more important to us, power and status or service and love? Being comfortably secure, looking after No 1, or being available to other people?

The boosting of my own ego, my own self-esteem, or the worship of God?

"If you are the Son of God...throw yourself down." Where do we place our ultimate trust? In the mystical and magical power of religion, in the outward trappings of routine and ritual or in the love and power of God himself? Are we able to put our trust totally and exclusively in him?

And am I also asking you today to reflect on the use of our money. What is it for? What do we really value? What proportion of our income should we give away? How can we serve our parish better, the church in this place? Should we be paying our way or is it okay to rely on investments from the past?

I believe the ultimate question we have to ask is contained in the second reading. *Do you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead?* Notice first that it is **in our hearts** that we must believe, in the very depths of our being.

This is what Lent is for, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, to make our hearts more receptive, more attentive, more loving, to make our hearts ready to die with Christ and to rise with Christ, to make our hearts ready for the Easter of Heaven, for the eternal Eastertide.

Fr Michael