

Do we want to turn stones into bread and get rich quick or are we prepared to accept whatever it is that God has in store for us?

Which gods are we going to worship – the gods of power and wealth and success or the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? There's no compromise. It's either one or the other.

Do we expect God to wave his magic wand for us, to give us instant results, or are we prepared to embrace the struggle of ordinary human living?

Which word do we really listen to, deep in our hearts? The Word of God, or the words of the world encouraging us to assert ourselves over others?

What sort of Catholic are we going to be – a Catholic at the heart of the Church trying to create a community of holiness and love, or the sort of Catholic who prefers to keep his distance and to remain on the sidelines?

What sort of human being are we going to be – someone who is open to God, open to change, open to the Spirit, or the sort of person who has his career path mapped out from an early age?

Decisions, decisions...

But there are, of course, two other things going on today. It's Valentine's Day and I am sure you are reeling from the number of cards you have received. And, as it happens, it's the 18th anniversary of my own ordination to the priesthood.

In a moment, I am going to ask the candidates for Confirmation whether they wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments.

Now, speaking personally, I know that I haven't always been the best kind of husband, the best kind of priest, the best kind of human being. But what I can say is that I try to make a decision every day of my life. I try to make a decision for the Lord. I try to place myself in his hands.

Today, we read that after his Baptism in the River Jordan, Jesus was led by the Spirit through the wilderness. As you, the candidates, make your commitment today, you are doing the same – you are allowing the Spirit to lead you. There will be plenty of temptation on the way, but on the other side of the wilderness is the promised land. In this time of decisions, pray for our candidates, pray for me and pray for one another, *for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*