I. Exegetical Material (see Dr. Brant Pitre -- Mass Readings Explained -- www.catholicproductions.com, for excellent exegesis each week -- it costs about $130/year)

A. The Sunday Scriptures During Lent

1. The Old Testament readings on Lenten Sundays are not meant to typologically correlate with the Gospel (as they do during Ordinary Time). They are a walk through salvation history as a way for the Church (and especially catechumens/candidates) to relive the Lord’s walk with Israel in as we get closer to the New Covenant being inaugurated at the Easter Vigil.

2. The Pauline readings on Lenten Sundays also have a catechetical character and we do not do a continuous reading of any one letter.

B. Interesting Gospel Details

1. The three temptations that Jesus is presented with correlate to what is traditionally called the “threefold concupiscence:” the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

   • Lust of the flesh → Take this stone and turn it to bread - disordered attraction to fleshly goods --- sexual pleasure, food, drink, etc.

   • Lust of the eyes → “I will give you all power and glory...if you worship me” - disordered attraction to possessions

   • Pride of life → “Throw yourself from the parapet,” in other words reveal your divinity to all in a way not in accord with the Father’s will - temptation to disobey God

2. These three temptations are what Adam and Eve fell to in the Garden. Jesus, as the New Adam, is here to set that right.

   • Eve saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), was effective in acquiring knowledge (lust of the eyes), and she took and ate of the tree that the Lord had commanded her to avoid (pride of life)
C. A Psalm of Exorcism

1. Psalm 91 was used by the Hebrew people as a psalm of exorcism. So it is interesting that Satan would quote this psalm to Jesus. As Dr. Pitre says -- “he quotes this Psalm because he knows it.”

2. This is also the Psalm recited at Night Prayer on Sundays and Solemnities. It is a Psalm of protection for God’s people from the wiles of the devil, the Prince of this world.

II. Idea for Preaching

A. Fighting Against the Triple Concupiscence

1. Lent is often to reduced to “giving up” one thing or another. Instead, we can focus on Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving as the antidotes to the sickness of the lust of the flesh (fasting fights this), the lust of the eyes (almsgiving fights this), and the Pride of Life (prayer, trying to be attentive to God’s will, fights this)

2. Define for folks what virtue is (a good, operative habit), and then encourage them to use Lent as an opportunity to consistently build habits in these three areas (or at least one of them!).

3. Bring in Psalm 91 as a great Psalm to meditate upon this Lent. When the “struggle gets real,” tell them to remember to flee to this Psalm which priests and religious pray every Sunday at Night Prayer and on every Solemnity. This is a Psalm describing God’s ultimate victory over Satan’s wiles and his (and the angels) protection over us!

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