

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent (A)  
March 13, 2011

What are the short-cuts in our lives?

What are the “quick fixes” that we hold onto?

Our lives are surrounded by short-cuts...promising us quicker results with less or no work.

We have short-cuts on our computers where we can access an application or perform a task with a single click of our mouse.

We have car washes where a few bucks and a couple of minutes, our cars are completely clean...without us having to pick up a water hose or soapy rag.

We have diet programs that promise weight loss quick and easy...and we don't even have to exercise.

Face it, short-cuts are all around us all the time...so much that we rely upon them on a daily basis with the hope that they'll make our lives easier.

But, what's so bad about short-cuts?

Why is the quick fix so terrible?

Well, some short-cuts aren't so bad...some really do make life more enjoyable.

But, then there are others that inevitably lead to dead ends rather than our desired goals.

For instance, in our Gospel today, Jesus was presented with a number of short-cuts that weren't really going to lead to his goal. Rather, they were going to lead to death.

One short-cut that Jesus was tempted with was turning stones into bread.

Sure, it would have been very easy for Jesus to snap his fingers and command the stones to become bread. This would have been a quick fix for him to solve his hunger I'm sure.

But, would mere bread really fulfill his very life for all eternity? No, only the WORD of God can do that...only the WORD of God provides us with everlasting nourishment and life.

A second short-cut that Jesus was tempted with was throwing himself down from the temple to see if God would really protect him.

Would it have been easy for Jesus to do this...knowing pretty sure that God would send His angels to guide him safely to the ground?

Yes, but is testing God the quickest way to gaining His love?

Definitely not! Only a relationship that is built upon mutual love in each other leads to fulfillment and unity.

The last short-cut that Jesus was tempted with was gaining power over a multitude of kingdoms if only he bowed down and worshiped Satan.

Once again, I'm sure it would have been very easy for Jesus, and for any one of us for that matter, to worship ANYONE knowing that fame, fortune, and power are to follow instantaneously.

But, who else are we to worship? Who else cares for us more than anything in the world? Who else would protect us from all harm? Who else provides us with life and all that we need in life? Who else gives us everlasting life?

Who else but God alone does all this for us and more? Who else but God alone are we to worship?

And so, not all short-cuts are good for us and not all short-cuts lead us to our desired goal in life, namely, eternal life with God.

As we reflect on this and on our own life, what short-cuts are we holding onto that we know aren't good for us and that we know won't help us on our journey to heaven?

For example, are we quick to do anything for fame and fortune and success...even selling others or ourselves out to get ahead?

Are we quick to cheat on a test rather than honestly study just so that we pass it?

Are we quick to quit on a relationship rather than work a little bit harder just because things get a little bumpy sometimes?

What are those short-cuts and quick fixes in our lives that we are tempted with and that we know we need to give up so that we might be better prepared to enter the kingdom of heaven?