A time to consider the giving up of what we are, for what we may become.
"Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." Today's Gospel brings us face-to-face with the reality of spiritual warfare. A battle is going on in the desert. The devil is out to win the allegiance of the Son of God. But Jesus fights back. Not with fists or knives, but with the word of God. For every temptation the devil proposes, Jesus arms himself with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17). This strategy proves effective. Ultimately, "the devil left him," and then Jesus was consoled by the presence of angels.

In our modern era, we face a new temptation: to deny the existence of spiritual beings. Angels appear to be little more than lawn ornaments or Christmas crafts, and too often the devil is reduced to an analogy for the vague presence of evil. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the father of lies, as Pope Francis has suggested, is to make us believe that he does not exist. But the word of God gives us a different idea: "Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Pt 5:8). This is no fairy tale. Satan wants to win our allegiance too.

During Lent, we have the opportunity to fortify ourselves for this serious, if silent, combat. Just as Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days before that diabolical encounter, we take these forty days of Lent to "conquer" the weak spots where we are susceptible to attack. We fast to strengthen our self-control, we give alms to strengthen our generosity, and we pray to strengthen our faith in God’s power and providence. A sincere effort now, in the "desert" of Lent, can lead us to victory as we engage in the ongoing spiritual battle for the allegiance of our souls.

(Lpi Resource Center)
Pray for ... the sick in our community, our homebound and nursing home residents and their care-givers, the deceased of our parish, and the family and friends who mourn them.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

We will again be sponsoring the **Baby Bottle Campaign for Abria Pregnancy Resources**.

Abria North Side provides life-affirming medical and personal support services, education, and resources for women and couples experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. You can help us by picking up an empty "Baby Bottle" at the Church entrances. Please take it home and place checks, cash or change into the bottle and return it at the end of the Lenten Season. Checks may be payable to Abria. Thank you for your continued support.

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The **Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of Christ, Minneapolis Community** invite men and women who, while still living their individual life style, respond to a call from God to live out their christian commitment by sharing in the life of prayer, mission and charism of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

When: Saturday, March 21st  
Time: 4:00 PM  
Where: OLV Convent

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We will be taking up a “Loose Change” collection at weekday Masses during Lent for the North Side Abria.
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