

## **Spirit of Lent**

We've just finished what can be best described as a great weekend, which was also a very tiring one. "Love Pancakes", with 90 people and 160 pancakes, followed by Messy Church with craft, food and chaos! Really good stuff. Before I dive into my reflections, I think a big thank you is warranted to the Mission & Outreach and the Children & Youth groups and perhaps especially that more than a few people are on both!

The two events were really a celebration and reminder of the beginning of Lent. Perhaps there is no better Bible passage than Jesus' being tested in the desert to remind us that following Him isn't about an easy ride. First off, Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit. We often focus on the Spirit's power to heal, to comfort and to bring joy. Whilst that's true, it's not the whole story of the Spirit, not by a long shot. The Spirit's leading Jesus was just the beginning. God's same Spirit would lead the Church into some very tough times too.

Jesus showed during His time in the desert that His heart, soul, mind and body could not be moved from the will and word of his Father; that to love, serve and worship God was everything - all He needed and all He would ever need.

Our focus wanders very easily - distractions, temptations and "better offers" all gang up on us to lead us away from focussing on God's word to us. Thankfully, Jesus has been there and where we fail in our discipleship, where we stumble, He is ready to reach out and drag us back on course.

Whether you are giving up something or taking on a more positive and active stance in Lent, know that you do so in the steps of the One Who does not give up and will not be swayed. His love will win through and His Spirit will help us do the same.

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