

LENT



During Lent we remember Christ in the wilderness, where he was tempted three times by the Devil. Here we have three paintings, from different periods, one for each of the temptations.

Our earliest picture is by Duccio, and shows the third temptation, when the Devil took Christ to a high mountain and offered him all the kingdoms of the world. But, of course, the Kingdom of Heaven is not such a kingdom. We should never lose sight of the fact that it is here, in the midst

of us now, and we are called to play our part in its realisation, by doing the will of God, and through our love for one another.



The second picture is by Botticelli, nearly 200 years later. This is a rather busy painting but we can clearly see the second temptation, when the Devil took Christ to the top of the temple and told him to prove to the people that he was the Son of God by throwing himself off, to be saved by angels. (It is at the centre top, if you are still looking.) This reminds us of the importance of faith, and that we come to Christ of our own free will.



The most recent picture is from the 1880s and by James Tissot. It shows the first temptation, when the Devil tried to persuade the hungry Christ to turn stones into bread. Both Christ and the Devil are depicted very differently from what we saw in Duccio, representing the very different outlooks of the nineteenth and fourteenth centuries. We can learn

from this too: God speaks afresh to every generation, including ours.