

2 B

One day a man was walking through a field, deep in meditation and reflection. He stood in awe before a huge oak tree, reflecting on the tiny acorns lying on the ground. These had fallen off in the wind. He then looked across the fence at a huge field of pumpkins - each one growing on a tiny vine plant. Suddenly he had a thought: 'God made a mistake, surely! Why should the huge pumpkins be on tiny vines while the tiny acorns grow on a huge oak tree? It doesn't make any sense'. Just then there was a gust of wind and a tiny acorn fell from the oak tree and plump! - it hit him straight on the head. He smiled a why smile and said 'Maybe God knew what he was doing, after all'.

Yes, God can appear to be behind the strangest of things. Take the case of Abraham. He was asked to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Surely in this case God must have made a mistake. God had just promised Abraham numerous descendants. However, Abraham doesn't question God but falls in with His plan and His faith is rewarded – the boy is spared. On the contrary, God did not spare his own Son but, as Scripture says, "he gave him up to benefit us all".

Last Sunday we saw where Jesus Himself was put to the test in the wilderness. What was at the root of these temptations? Believe it or not I think that the Tempter had pinned his hopes on Jesus abandoning His Father's will when facing the Cross. Yes, Jesus did say in Gethsemane " Father, If it be possible, let this chalice pass me by" but to the disappointment of Satan, he added: "not as I will but as thou wilt."

A few years ago do you remember the ad on telly for British Gas? When the guy in the ad clicked his fingers a blue flame appeared at the top of his thumb, while he said: 'don't you just love being in control'. Most of us do. Sometimes we're tempted even to control God and tell Him what to do. God can

sometimes, metaphorically speaking, pull the rug from under our feet so that we lose our grip on things and hopefully entrust ourselves more into his arms. But for some it has the opposite effect – they lose faith and may even turn their backs on God altogether.

Abraham made that leap of faith when at God's invitation he was even willing to sacrifice His only Son. So also did Moses and Elijah. At God's bidding and against all odds Moses led his people out of Egypt which was no mean feat. Elijah risked his life in crossing swords with the wicked Queen Jezebel when stamping out the worship of that false God Baal in Israel. That is why they are standing shoulder to shoulder with Jesus on the Mount of the Transfiguration. Tradition has it that, like Jesus, Elijah and Moses was taken up in glory at the end of their lives – a fitting tribute to their unbounded trust in God in a face of great opposition.

We imitate these great worthies of the OT if God is allowed to mould and fashion our lives with our consent of course. The journey through Lent to Easter should take us away from reliance on things of flesh and more reliant on God Our Father.