



**“Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes,’
and your ‘No’ mean ‘No.’”**

MATTHEW 5:37

Some Walk Away

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

“Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ mean ‘No’” (Matthew 5:37). This teaching of Jesus seems to get lost, perhaps because it comes at the end of a long listing of commandments. Regardless, it seems to get right to the point, almost making the other commandments unnecessary or perhaps clarifying them. Either you are going to be a child of your heavenly Father and live like one, or you are not. If you are a child of God, you would not contemplate any evil behaviors, let alone actually do them.

That is the clarity of the teaching of Jesus. It is authentic. It is compelling. It invites a response. Yet, there are those who were present with him who did not understand. Who missed the point. Who insisted on another way. Who could not discern the simplicity of the truth. To each of these men and women, including some with the religious title of scribe or Pharisee, he observed, “And if the light in you is darkness, how great will the darkness be” (Matthew 6:23). Even sadder is that not only did they miss the point, they also simply walked away.

Do you want to say more than a simple “Yes” or “No”? Do you want to say, “Yes, but... I can’t do it now.” Or “I can’t forgive this particular person.” Or “I can’t welcome this particular stranger.” Or “I can’t love him or her or them.”

Have you also missed the point? Do you also want to walk away? ●



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Reflect

What teachings of Jesus are too hard to consider?

Dear Padre,

My grandkids' parents don't want them to be baptized. Can I do it myself secretly so as not to cause problems?

Your concern is understandable, but secret baptisms are prohibited in the Catholic Church. The decision to baptize a child is determined by his or her parents. To secretly usurp their decision may cause problems of its own. For an infant to be baptized, “The parents or at least one of them or the person who legitimately takes their place must consent,” and “There must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion” (*Code of Canon Law*, 868 §1). An exception is permitted when the child’s life is in immediate danger: “An infant of Catholic parents or even of non-Catholic parents is baptized licitly in danger of death, even against the will of the parents”(CCL 868 §2). Here, the Church’s pastoral concern is for the child to receive the immediate graces from the sacrament; the question of raising the child in the faith becomes moot in a life-or-death situation.

“Since the earliest times, baptism has been administered to children, for it is a grace and a gift of God that does not presuppose any human merit.... Entry into Christian life gives access to true freedom” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1282). Continue to pray that your family may see baptism as a sign of God’s love, which offers true freedom for humanity. ●



JOHN KRUS

Fr. Byron J. Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



FABRIZIO MAFFEI / SHUTTERSTOCK

The Spirit opens borders, first of all, in our hearts. He is the Gift that opens our lives to love. His presence breaks down our hardness of heart, our narrowness of

mind, our selfishness, the fears that enchain us and the narcissism that makes us think only of ourselves.... Sadly, oddly enough, in a world of burgeoning “social” media, we risk being ever more alone.

HOMILY, ROME, JUNE 8, 2025

Monday

February 16

Weekday

Jas 1:1–11

Mk 8:11–13

Tuesday

February 17

Weekday

Jas 1:12–18

Mk 8:14–21

Wednesday

February 18

Ash Wednesday

Jl 2:12–18

2 Cor 5:20–6:2

Mt 6:1–6, 16–18

Thursday

February 19

Thursday after

Ash Wednesday

Dt 30:15–20

Lk 9:22–25

Friday

February 20

Friday after

Ash Wednesday

Is 58:1–9a

Mt 9:14–15

Saturday

February 21

Saturday after

Ash Wednesday

Is 58:9b–14

Lk 5:27–32

Sunday

February 22

First Sunday

of Lent

Gn 2:7–9; 3:1–7

Rom 5:12–19 or

5:12, 17–19

Mt 4:1–11

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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