



“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.”

MATTHEW 4:1



Jesus for the Win

MIGUEL DULICK

The account of the temptations could be presented as a comical play. Pope Francis insisted, “Don’t talk to the devil!” Indeed, Jesus does not engage in dialogue with Satan, much less any negotiation or any business. Stones become bread? Jesus may have fasted for forty days, but he’s had plenty to eat—“every word that comes forth from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Nor will Jesus “test” his Father by jumping off the “parapet of the temple” (like the bell tower of a gothic church). (See Matthew 5-7.) You don’t play God, and you don’t play *with* God. Satan really beclowns himself with the last temptation—promising the whole world if Jesus would just take a knee? No one would fall for that, would they?

Except—most of us. We’d do the bread; we’d do the jump; we’d definitely do the world! Look at the first reading, from Genesis. Adam and Eve give up paradise for a piece of fruit! It’s a sad story because Eve does chat with the serpent, answering questions, allowing for a different point of view. But, as they say on Facebook, Satan “destroys” her! And Adam, too. If they didn’t sew fig leaves for each other, the whole story would be unbearable. Even as they realize their sin, there is a little tenderness.

Saint Paul explains it clearly. Sin entered the world, but with Jesus Christ, there is an “overflow” of grace for the many. (See Romans 5:15.) And that’s what Lent is about—a flood of grace. ●



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Reflect

What grace do I pray for this Lent—for myself and for someone who is struggling?

Dear Padre,

I was taught that it is a requirement to fast at least one hour before receiving Communion. However, I've seen donuts out before Mass begins and hear candy wrappers being crumpled around me. This seems disrespectful to me.

It is important to use the correct words when describing a particular action. In this case, “requirement” does not really capture the full meaning and understanding of what the Church teaches. A better understanding is that it is a discipline and a practice of the Church to ordinarily observe the eucharistic fast for one hour before receiving holy Communion. If you are of a certain age, you may remember that there have been changes regarding the eucharistic fast. A “requirement” might suggest that the fast is integral to the sacrament itself. It is not.

The second part of your question seems to be a matter of perception. Based on your perception, you judge something to be not quite right. But, consider that there are many reasons why hospitality may be set up before Mass. The crumpling of wrappers could be something other than what you identify. Regardless, you are not required to assume the burden of policing what is taking place at Mass. It is much better to participate, celebrate, and be grateful for the sacrament that we gather to experience as a community of faith. ●



GREGORY SHERITZ

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
February 23	February 24	February 25	February 26	February 27	February 28	March 1
<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Second Sunday of Lent</i>
Lv 19:1–2, 11–18	Is 55:10–11	Jon 3:1–10	Est C:12, 14–16, 23–25	Ez 18:21–28	Dt 26:16–19	Gn 2:1–4a
Mt 25:31–46	Mt 6:7–15	Lk 11:29–32	Mt 7:7–12	Mt 5:20–26	Mt 5:43–48	2 Tm 1:8b–10
						Mt 17:1–9

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



JIM WEST

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Today, signs of hope are increasingly found in care homes, communities for minors, centers for listening and acceptance, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and low-income schools. How many of these quiet signs of hope often go unnoticed and yet are so important for setting aside our indifference and inspiring others to become involved in various forms of volunteer work!

MESSAGE FOR WORLD DAY OF THE POOR, ROME, JUNE 13, 2025