



I Just Told You!

MIGUEL DULICK

Would it surprise you to know that Jesus uses the same Greek verb to chase Peter away—“Get behind me, Satan!” (Matthew 16:23) that he used to call him in the first place—“Come after me” (Matthew 4:19)? Pity the translator who must assign opposite meanings to the same word! Jesus changed Simon’s name to Peter when he called him, and now he changes it to Satan for his demotion. But, as harsh as the rebuke is, maybe we could say Jesus does want Peter behind him, but not *too* far behind. In fact, immediately after dealing with Peter, Jesus issues a general call, using the same “trigger” word: “Whoever wishes to *come after* me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

The cross! That’s how the controversy started, when Peter “took Jesus aside” (literally, “collared” him) to forbid even the thought of any passion or any cross. (See Matthew 16:22.)

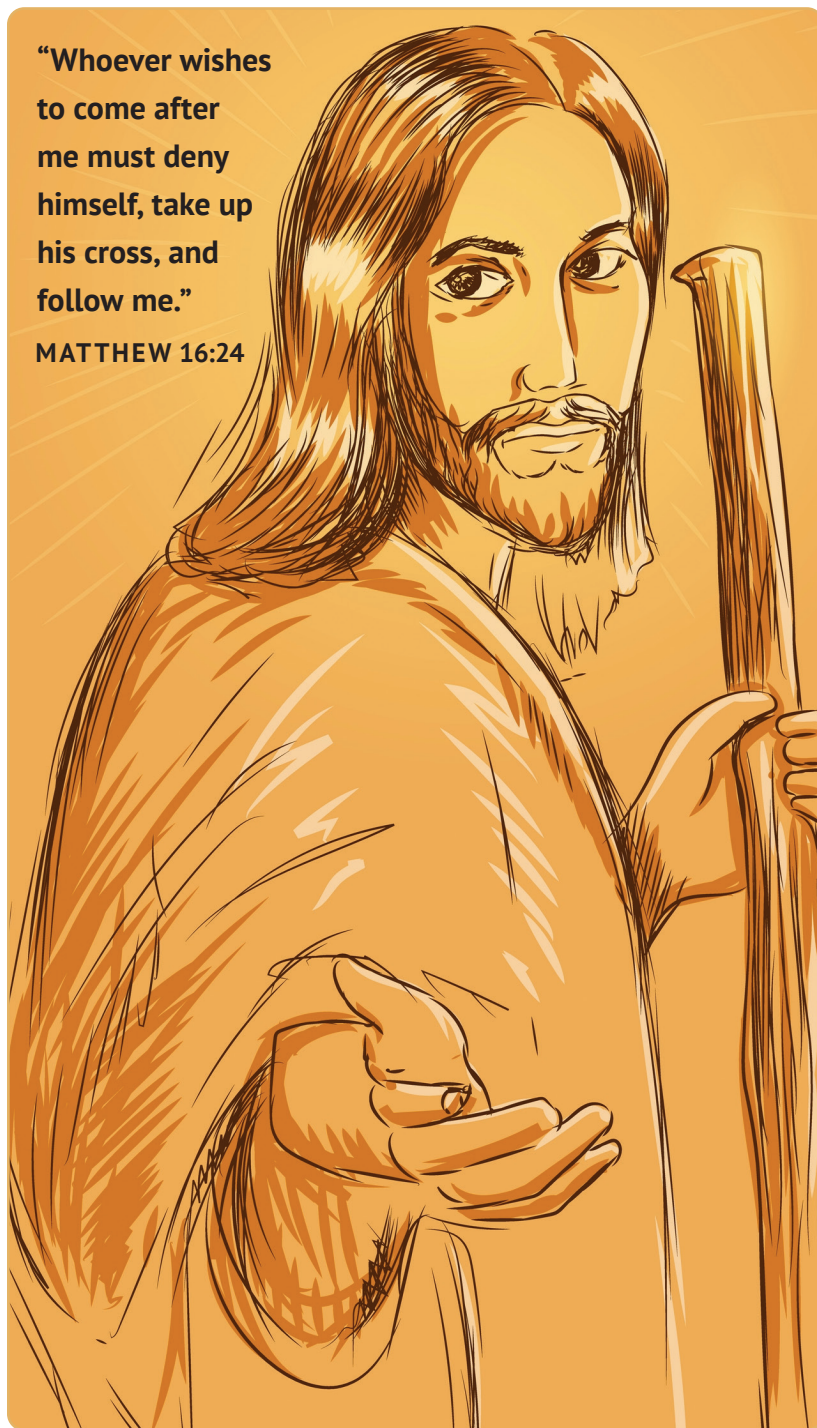
How am I tempted as Peter was to avoid any talk of a cross? I don’t even want to admit I’m a sinner, much less that there is a cross for me. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, has some advice for all of us who think like Satan: “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God,” and “Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God” (Romans 12:1–2). Everything for Jesus. ●



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**“Whoever wishes
to come after
me must deny
himself, take up
his cross, and
follow me.”**

MATTHEW 16:24



Reflect

What cross are you carrying? Can you unite it with Jesus’ cross and offer it as prayer?

Dear Padre,

Are we required to disobey or break an evil law?

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, a just law has four characteristics. It must be (1) an ordinance of reason, (2) for the common good, (3) properly promulgated, and (4) by a legitimate authority.

According to St. Augustine, evil is a lack of something that should be there. When applied to law, if one of the four characteristics is

missing, the law lacks something that should be there, and thus is evil. An unjust law, in other words, is an evil law. As Christians, we are generally encouraged to obey the laws of the state. As the Apostle Paul states, “Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God” (Romans 13:1). At the same time, we also have the responsibility of forming our consciences according to God’s revelation in Scripture and Tradition as interpreted by the divinely ordained teaching authority of the Church. Although we are not bound to follow an unjust law, the degree to which we should actively disobey it depends on the level of evil the law promotes. Because of its serious nature, a law promoting abortion, for example, should be actively resisted through peaceful protests and appropriate legal and civil activism. Laws that promote lesser evils need to be carefully evaluated by Church authorities and our own well-informed consciences. ●

Fr. Dennis J. Billy, CSsR / DearPadre.org



MIND AND / SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

War is back in vogue, and a zeal for war is spreading. The principle established after the Second World



War, which prohibited nations from using force to violate the borders of others, has been completely undermined. Peace is no longer sought as a gift and a desirable good in itself.... Instead, peace is sought through weapons as a condition for asserting one’s own dominion.

ADDRESS TO DIPLOMATIC CORE, ROME, JANUARY 9, 2026

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Monday

August 31

Weekday

1 Cor 2:1–5

Lk 4:16–30

Tuesday

September 1

Weekday

1 Cor 2:10b–16

Lk 4:31–37

Wednesday

September 2

Weekday

1 Cor 3:1–9

Lk 4:38–44

Thursday

September 3

St. Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church

1 Cor 3:18–23

Lk 5:1–11

Friday

September 4

Weekday

1 Cor 4:1–5

Lk 5:33–39

Saturday

September 5

Weekday

1 Cor 4:6b–15

Lk 6:1–5

Sunday

September 6

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ez 33:7–9

Rom 13:8–10

Mt 18:15–20