# Dear Padre,

GREGORY SHEMITZ

***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. ●

***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 |
| *Lenten Weekday* | *Lenten Weekday* | *Lenten Weekday* | *Lenten Weekday* | *Lenten Weekday* | *Lenten Weekday* | *Second Sunday of Lent* |
| 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

Liguori PUBLICATIONS A Redemptorist Ministry

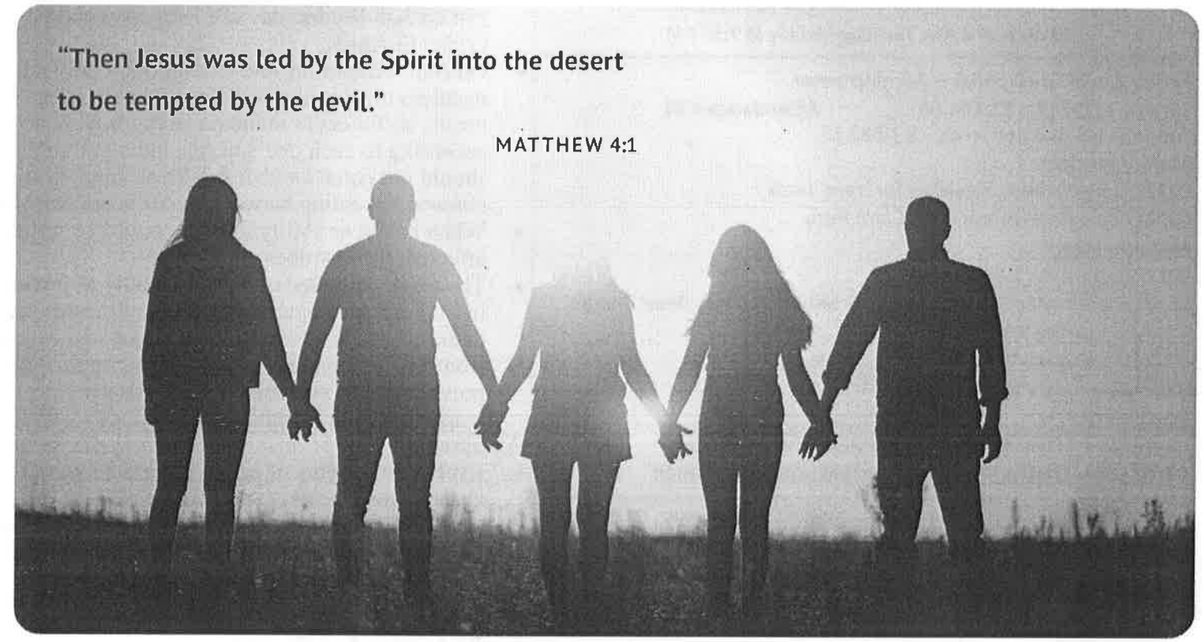
**Catholic. Pastoral. Trusted.** © 2026 Liguori Publications. *Imprimi Potest:* Fr. Kevin Zubel, CSsR, Provincial, Denver Province, the Redemptorists. Liguori Publications, a nonprofit corporation, is an apostolate of the Redemptorists. To learn more about the Redemptorists, visit Redemptorists.com. No part of this work may be used in any form without the prior written permission of Liguori Publications. Scripture texts in this work are taken from *The New American Bible, Revised Edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA. Visit Liguori.org or call 800-325-9521.

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

February 22, 2026

***First Sunday of Lent (A)***

Genesis 2:7–9; 3:1–7 / Romans 5:12–19 or 5:12, 17–19 / Matthew 4:1–11




# 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. ●

LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF *OUR PARISH COMMUNITY*

## Reflect

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

© 2026 LIGUORI PUBLICATIONS • A MINISTRY OF THE REDEMPTORISTS • IMAGE: MAXIM IBRAGIMOV / SHUTTERSTOCK

**Office hours are Wednesday & Thursday 7:30 am—5:30 pm.**

If there is an Emergency you may call Corinne at 715-250-0567 or Father David at 920-228-1814. Thank-you.

**St Mary's Mass schedule in Black Creek: Saturdays @ 4 PM, Sundays @ 8 AM, Tuesday—Friday @ 7:30 AM**

**Father David Greskowiak—Administrator**
**Sunday 2/15/26 = $1,146.00 Attendance = 81**
**Amount needed per week - $ 1,583.27**

**Mass Intentions**
**02/22/26—**Birthday Blessings for Irene Jarek
**03/01/26—** Remembrance of Carol Herb

**Mass Servers –**
**02/22/26—** Alex & Reagan Krings
**03/01/26—** Malachi Gray, Landon & Natalie Fischer, Beau Diemel

**Ministers of the Word –**
**02/22/26—** Anita Wegner
**03/01/26—** Jerry Nowak

**Hospitality**
**02/22/26—** David Nowak, Charlie Herb, Bernie Weier
**03/01/26—** Charlie Herb, David Nowak, Karen VanLanen

Core Vision Meeting Wednesday March 4 @ 1 PM

**RE NEWS: RE NEWS:**

**Wed. Mar 4th** 6:30pm RE Class. 2nd grade Sacrament Reconciliation with Father David.

**Wed. Mar. 11th** 6:30pm RE Class. Confirmation class lead Stations of the Cross at 7:25pm.

**Sun. Mar. 15th** 10am Mass. Confirmation Student Sponsor Meeting in Church Hall after Mass.

**Wed. Mar. 18th** 6:30pm. Grades 3-11 Lenten Reconciliation Service.

**Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry**
**Wednesday** ***March 18 4—6 PM***
**Saturday,** ***March 21 9—11 AM***
***Thank you for all the donations !*** **St Patty's—donate green vegetables**
**Feb. Report—40 Families, 110 Individuals, 24 Kids, 3 new families**

Mass Intentions that are available for the year of 2026: **April** 1, 2, 3, 4; **September** 20,(Picnic); **October** 18, 25; **November** 19 **Deer Hunter's Mass, Thanksgiving**; **December** 20, **Christmas Day,** 27, and **New Years.** You may contact the office.

## *Happy Birthday!*

**February 22** Stanley Heinemeyer; **25** Shelly Stascak; **26** Pat Stammer; **27** Irene Jarek, Andrew Vanrite; **28** Eleanor Couch, James Jarek, Brody Maroszek, Megan Urban **March 3** Dana James, Jason Hutter; **5** Laura Coisman; **6** Carly Herb, Ardell VerCauteren; **7** Linda Schroeder; **9** Lily Martin, Ashley Wegner; **10** Raquel Strayer; **11** Dawn Martin, Cody Owen; **12** Elizabeth Hackel; **13** David Henn, Alex Kring, Cheryl Letter, Troy Wegner; **17** Lucas Eggers; **18** Brynn Drossart; **19** Janelle Balthazor, Kyle Malueg; **21** Larry Svetnicka, Cody Wegner; **24** Erik Seefeldt; **26** Steven Stascak; **27** Mary Court, Kevin Peeters, James Letter; **28** Brent Hartleben; **29** Donna Svetnicka; **30** Joseph Renner; **31** Reid Bohm

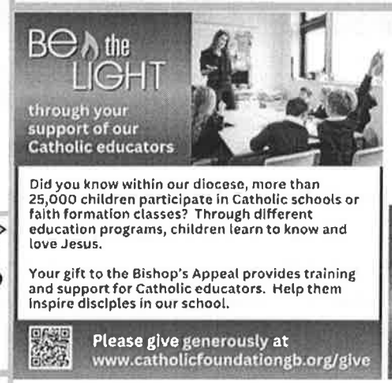
**Church Regulations for Fasting and Abstinence during Lent**

**Fasting**

- Everyone 18 or older to age 59 years, is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday (18 February) and Good Friday (3 April).
- On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday only one full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Liquids are allowed but eating between meals is not permitted.
- When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.
- Those who are physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes, pregnant or nursing women and excused from fast and abstinence. Common sense should prevail, and ill persons should not further jeopardize their health by fasting.

**Abstinence**

- Everyone 14 years of age or older is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday (18 February), all the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday (3 April). This means no meat, meat-soup or gravy may be taken.




**2026 Bishop's Appeal**

**"Be the Light"**

We invite everyone who is able, to please participate in the Bishop's Appeal. Our parish goal this year is **$14,805.00.** As of 17 February we have received **1 gift of $600.00.** If you have already given, thank you so much. If you haven't given before, please consider making your first gift this year. Every gift makes a difference. Those who are able may want to join the Crozier Society with a gift of $500 or more, which helps these ministries to reach even more people.

Please prayerfully consider supporting the 2026 Bishop's Appeal. You may have received materials and a pledge card at home in the mail. If you have not, we have materials at the entrances of the church. You can also visit *www.catholicfoundation.org/give.*

Thank you for helping St. Lawrence Parish and our Diocese share the light of Christ.

**Reflection on the 1st Sunday of Lent**

Here is an excerpt from an article titled: ***"1st Sunday of Lent Year A, Sunday February 22, 2026"*** found on the "Young Catholics" website—*young-catholics.com:*

**Tempted**

The 1st Sunday of Lent Year A tells the story of Jesus being tempted in the desert. After fasting for forty days, he is hungry and weak, making him vulnerable to the devil's tricks. The devil tempts him three times, trying to get him to use his power for himself, to test God's protection, and to worship him for worldly gain. But each time, Jesus responds with words from Scripture, staying true to his mission and trust in God.

This shows us that temptation is part of human life. Even Jesus faced it. But his example teaches us that we can resist temptation by staying close to God and knowing his Word. Jesus did not argue or debate with the devil. He simply relied on his faith and Scripture to stand firm.

We, too, face temptations in our daily lives. We might be tempted to seek comfort, power, or approval in ways that pull us away from God. But the 1st Sunday of Lent Year A reminds us to follow Jesus' example. We can lean on prayer, Scripture, and faith to stay strong. This passage also shows that temptation itself is not a sin. It is how we respond that matters. Jesus shows us the way to overcome it. By trusting in God and his promises, we can resist and grow stronger in our faith.

**A Denial of Reality**

The temptations in the desert challenge us to look at the false promises of the world. The devil tempted Jesus to never be hungry, never be harmed, and to control all earthly power. These temptations offer a life without suffering or dependence on God. But Jesus rejected these lies and chose (to trust and obey) God.

The 1st Sunday of Lent Year A reminds us that we are not meant to control everything. We will face challenges, needs, and suffering. But we are called to trust God's plan for us. Jesus' refusal to turn stones into bread shows us that we do not live on material things alone. His rejection of testing God's protection shows us to trust God without demanding proof. And his refusal to worship the devil for power teaches us to serve God alone.

Lent invites us to confront our own desires for comfort, security, and control. The practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving help us do this. Prayer keeps us close to God and reminds us of his presence. Fasting teaches us to rely on God when we face needs and wants. Almsgiving helps us let go of material things and trust in God's care.

The 1st Sunday of Lent Year A challenges us to trust God even when life is hard. It invites us to give up the false promises of the world and follow Jesus' example of faith and obedience. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we grow closer to God and learn to depend on him.

**We Are Not Alone**

The story of Jesus' temptation shows that even he faced struggles. But he was not alone—he trusted in God and was strengthened by his faith. The 1st Sunday of Lent Year A reminds us that we, too, are never alone in our trials and temptations. God is always with us, offering his love and mercy. We all face moments of weakness and times when we fall into temptation. But this Sunday shows us that no matter how far we stray, we can always return to God. Jesus' victory over temptation gives us hope that we can overcome our own struggles. It also reminds us of God's endless mercy.

Lent is a time to turn back to God with trust and humility. It is a time to seek forgiveness and strength. Like Jesus, we can lean on prayer and Scripture to guide us. When we feel alone in our struggles, we can remember that Jesus understands our challenges because he faced them, too. The 1st Sunday of Lent …gives us hope that God's mercy is greater than our failures. It invites us to keep trying, to keep praying, and to keep trusting in God's love. We are never alone, no matter how difficult the journey may be.

Stations of the Cross are **this Sunday, 22 February after Mass.**
We invite parishioners to please stay after Mass and join us for this special Lenten devotion and walk with Jesus in his Passion. It takes about 30 minutes.

FORMED

**Want a good digital way to observe the Lenten Season? The FORMED website is a great way!**

CRS RICE BOWL

Rice Bowls are available in front of the church in the baskets by the sanctuary steps.