



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

First Sunday of Lent

February 26, 2023

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

Repent and Believe in the Gospel

Ash Wednesday ushered us into the Season of Lent. A holy time is given to all of us to reflect on God's goodness, kindness, and mercy. But such goodness came from a bounty of sacrifices that Jesus had to endure for our sake. And that these sacrifices would be a stepping ground for our path to savor the gift of salvation through Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

This first Sunday of Lent makes us realize that life can be without temptations. Jesus experienced this through the devil's allurements to satisfy His hunger, power, glory, comfort, and security. He could easily have responded to all of these, but He did not. He knows that though they were seemingly delightful, they could have brought the end of goodness and evil to triumph. To look into this situation that Jesus experienced, He already made a great sacrifice to give up the devil's enticements, satisfaction, power, prestige, comfort, and security.

Jesus' temptation presents us with a clear reality. We are all tempted in various ways. The seeming delight is so beautiful, alluring, or enticing that welcoming it would give us the happiness and comfort we desire. Temptations are always an attraction to do the easier way, like stealing so as not to toil, to forget about the poor and needy in order to have more resources and enjoyment for our pleasure and satisfaction. Also, to be unfaithful to have fun and the thrill of life and to lie so as not to be involved in a difficult situation. But thinking about it, does it give one's life peace of mind or even true joy that we truly long for? It won't. It will only lead to sadness and, eventually, losing our salvation.

In this Lenten journey, we are brought into a face-to-face reality with our very selves and confront the things we need to change. We are invited to look deeper into our hearts and minds, where we can change direction to live in grace rather than sin. Although we see that temptations are real, we can also turn away from them, as Jesus Himself showed us. He is our strength to overcome every enticement of the devil we invited into and become triumphant to live in peace, love, and joy in Jesus.

I invite everyone to make these days moments of grace. In doing so, we can radiate Christ into the world needing conversion and call everyone to Him, the source of life and salvation.

May we all have a faith-filled Lenten Journey and lead us to the joyous celebration of Easter!

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual