

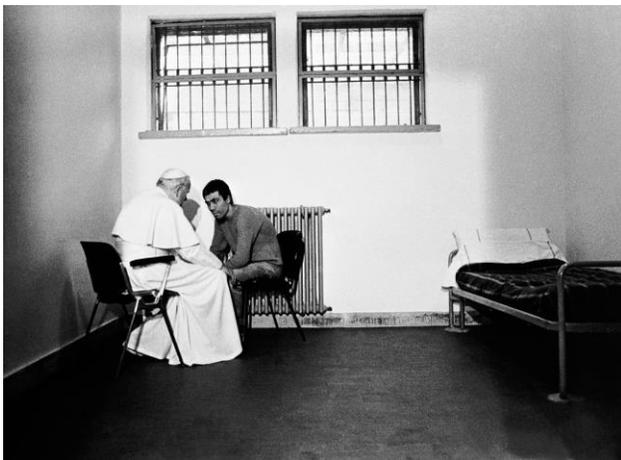
How Does the Devil Steal Your Peace



Blessings to All:

The door into your spiritual center is guarded by Peace. "And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Phil 4:7

It is no secret that the world is in turmoil and evil actions are reported on the News every hour of the day. We live in a time of instant reporting of '**man's inhumanity to man.**' Peace within the heart and soul is needed more than ever. The devil works to steal our peace, so that he can open the door of our soul to wreak havoc in all aspects of our lives. A small disagreement between husband and wife; mother and daughter; father and son; can grow into much larger calamities if not resolved in a timely fashion.



Pope John Paul II showed us his understanding of the need for peace in one's soul, when he went to prison to visit his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agaca.

He went to offer forgiveness and to help Agaca find peace in his soul. Many people see the photo on the left as Pope John offering forgiveness and that is true, but the other reason and more important is that he wanted Agaca to find peace so that he was

able to see the evil that he had done. When evil is confronted with the *Light of Truth, evil flees*. Pope John Paul II wanted to bring Light into Agaca soul. If evil is allowed to remain in a soul it may eventually drive out all Light of God.

John 3:20-21 brings wisdom and understanding about evil in the soul when he wrote **"For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21* But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God."**

St. Pope John Paul II did not leave a **peace** encyclical but his entire life was a testament to his trusting in Jesus and the spiritual peace that Jesus gave him. He



spoke about forgiveness being an *essential* component in having peace in your heart and soul. In his speech in December 8, 1996, his central theme is found in the first paragraph....*"Certainly there are many factors which can help restore peace, while safeguarding the demands of justice and human dignity. But no process of peace can ever begin unless an attitude of sincere forgiveness takes root in human hearts. When such forgiveness is lacking, wounds continue to fester, fueling in the younger generation endless resentment, producing a desire for revenge and causing fresh destruction. Offering and accepting forgiveness is the essential condition for making the journey towards authentic and lasting peace."*

Each of us carries scars in our hearts and souls from events that happened in our past or just yesterday. Some were placed there by others in unkind ways or by bitter arguments. Some scars were placed there by relationships with friends, loved ones or family members. But each scar left unhealed will fester and cause harm to our souls.

If you are carrying scars that need to be healed, remember that forgiveness is a road that leads to peace. Forgive yourself; forgive those who have injured you by words, deeds or actions; forgive your parents living or dead if you carry a burden that needs to be healed. If you have such scars, then now is the time to take some quiet time to

ask Jesus to bring Light into your soul and heal all the scars and injuries that need healing. Trust in Him.



Great Saying by St. Mother Teresa

“People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do

good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.”

Forgiveness & Peace (A most incredible true story)

By [Geoff Heggadon](#)

The scene is a courtroom trial in South Africa after Apartheid



In a court stands Officer Van de Broek (aka Vanderbrook, Van Der Broek) who tortured and killed both the husband and the son of a South African woman during apartheid. We are in a sitting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; the officer has just admitted his crimes, including shooting the widow's son, burning his body and holding a party nearby.

A frail black woman rises slowly to her feet. She is something over 70 years of age. Facing across the room are several white security police officers, one of whom, Mr. Van de Broek, has just been tried and found implicated in the

murders of both the woman's son and her husband some years before. He had come to the woman's home, taken her son, shot him at point blank range and then set the young man's body on fire while he and his officers partied nearby.

Several years later, Van de Broek and his cohorts had returned to take away her husband as well. For many months, she heard nothing of his whereabouts. Then almost two years after her husband's disappearance, Van de Broek came back to fetch the woman herself.

How vividly she remembers that evening, going to a place beside a river where she was shown her husband, bound and beaten, but still strong in spirit, lying on a pile of wood. The last words heard from his lips as the officers poured gasoline over his body and set him aflame were, "Father forgive them..."

Now the woman stands in the courtroom and listens to the confessions offered by Mr. Van de Broek. A member of the South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission turns to her and asks, "So what do you want? How should justice be done to this man who has so brutally destroyed your family?"

"I want three things," begins the old woman calmly, but confidently. "I want first to be taken to the place where my husband's body was burned so that I can gather up the dust and give his remains a decent burial."

She pauses, then continues "My husband and son were my only family, I want secondly, therefore, for Mr. Van de Broek to become my son. I would like him to come twice a month to the ghetto and spend a day with me so that I can pour out on him whatever love I still have remaining in me.

"And finally," she says, "I want a third thing. This is also the wish of my husband. And so, I would kindly ask someone to come to my side and lead me across the courtroom so that I can take Mr. Van de Broek in my arms and embrace him and let him know that he is truly forgiven."

As the court assistants come to lead the elderly woman across the room, Mr. Van de Broek, overwhelmed by what he has just heard, faints.



As he does, those in the courtroom, family, friend's neighbors – all victims of decades of oppression and injustice – begin to sing, softly but assuredly. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." This woman understood that to be reconciled with God and to be reconciled with neighbors and enemies is to be free indeed and

have peace within her soul.

Peace Within Us is a Fruit of the Spirit of Christ

St Paul writes in his letter to the Colossians (3:12-15) how we are to love and forgive one another.

“forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.”

Christ spirit is within you....you are in Christ....and Christ is within you. *This saying is very important to grasp.* Do you believe Christ lives within you? These are not mere words but a part of our Faith.



Jesus wants us to know that he resides in our soul. In Matthew 25:31-40 He leaves no doubt that how you treat others is how you treated him.

"When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32* Before him will be gathered all the

nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 33 and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; 35* for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? 38 And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? 39 And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' 40* And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'"

In Corinthians 12:13 & 27 Paul says " For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 27*Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."

Don't let the evil one steal your Peace. **For Peace is a gift of Christ that rules and guards the soul.** Peace within our souls reminds us that we are God's



children redeemed through the Cross of Christ. A great price was paid for us.

Remember how Christ, hanging on the Cross, reached out to His Father for those who were responsible for His torture... "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do."

Christ wants us to do the same, so that His Peace will guard our souls and produce forgiveness, love and good fruits of the Spirit that abides in us.



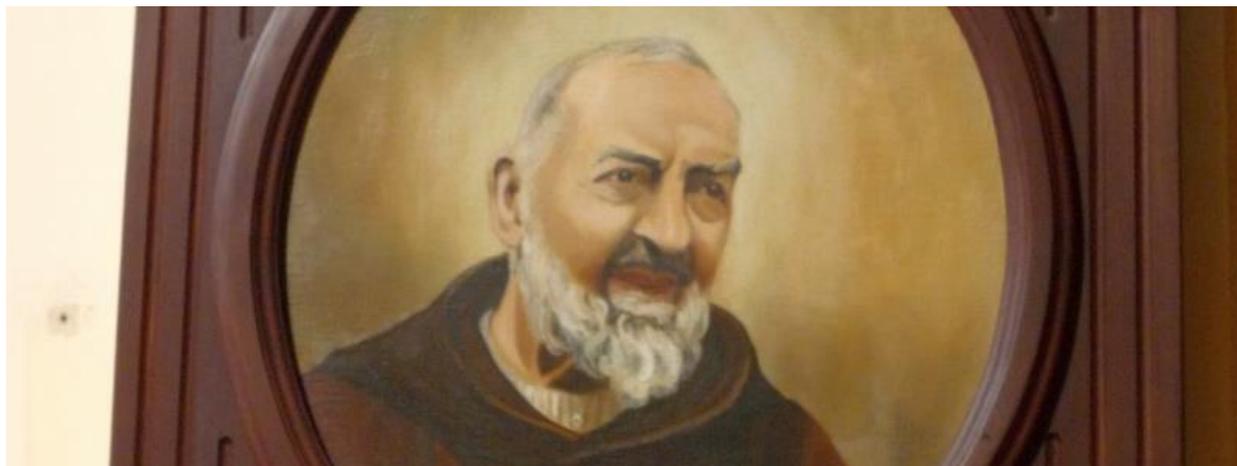
As you go about your day, the evil one will put obstacles in your path. But be prepared and learn the ways in which darkness tries to steal the light of grace from you. You may not be even aware of the devil's ploys but here is a way to bring his actions to light.

For One Day Do This...From the time you arise in the morning until you go to bed that night, write on a note pad, the attempts to steal your peace. No one is going to grade you on what you wrote. The devil will try to

"tell you not to do this, that it is a waste of your time". Then you will know, if these thoughts pop into your head, that he does not want to bring to light his sly ways to steal your Peace. You might be amazed and shocked as well at what you will write down. Just kept the notes in an outline form, so that you understand them. At the end of the day read them to yourself and then give them to Jesus. Then throw away the paper. Now you will know some of the avenues the evil forces use to try to steal your peace.

If you go about your day and you do not have any attempts to steal your peace, you are very fortunate and blessed.

Two Saints who struggled daily with the Devil



Born in the late 19th century, St. Padre Pio lived and died in Italy – but was known and revered throughout the world when he died in 1968. A holy priest, miracle-worker, and stigmatist, St. Padre Pio was also regularly attacked by demons.

According to Fr. Gabriele Amorth, a leading Vatican exorcist, “Padre Pio’s real enemies were the demons who besieged him. [...] The great and constant struggle of Padre Pio’s life was with those enemies of God and human souls, the devils who tried to capture his soul.” Even in his youth, St. Padre Pio would enjoy incredible celestial visions, but also suffer demonic attacks. Fr. Amorth explains:

“The devil would appear to him as an ugly black cat, or in the shape of a truly repugnant animal. The obvious intent was to fill him with terror. Other times demons came as young girls, nude and provocative, performing obscene dances, to test the young priest’s chastity. But Padre Pio sensed his greatest danger when the devil tried to deceive him by taking on the form of one of his superiors (his provincial superior or his spiritual director) or in a sacred form (the Lord, the Virgin, or St. Francis).”

This last tactic – of the devil appearing as someone good and holy – was a particular problem. Here’s how St. Padre Pio would discern a vision:

“He noticed a certain timidity when the Virgin or the Lord first appeared, followed by a sense *of peace* when the vision departed. On the other hand, a devil in sacred form provoked an immediate feeling of joy and attraction, ***replaced afterwards by remorse and sadness.***”

Satan would even sometimes attack St. Padre Pio physically. He describes this in one letter he wrote to a priest confidant:

“These devils don’t stop striking me, even making me fall down from the bed. They even tear off my shirt to beat me! But now they do not frighten me anymore. **Jesus loves me, He often lifts me and places me back on the bed.**”

Indeed, if we are close to the Lord, we should have no fear of demons.

St. Gemma Galgani



St. Gemma Galgani was a late 19th century Italian mystic who had incredible spiritual experiences.

In a letter to a priest, she wrote:

“During the last two days Jesus has been telling me after Holy Communion: ‘My daughter, the devil will soon wage a great war against you.’ These words I hear in my heart continuously. Please pray for me...”

She quickly realized that prayer was the best defense. In response, Satan gave her violent headaches in order to make sleeping difficult for her. Her fatigue then made sleeping more difficult – but she persevered:

"How many efforts does not that wretch make to make it impossible for me to pray! Yesterday evening he tried to kill me, and would have succeeded if Jesus had not come quickly to my aid. I was terrified and kept the image of Jesus in my mind..."

At one point, while she was writing a letter, the devil "snatched the pen from her hand and tore up the paper then dragged her from the table, seizing her by the hair with such violence that it came off in his brutal claws." She describes another attack in one of her writings:

"The demon came before me as a giant of great height and kept saying to me "For thee there is no more hope of salvation. Thou are in my hands!". I replied that God is merciful and therefore I fear nothing. Then, giving me a hard blow on the head in a rage he said "accursed be you!" and then he disappeared.

"I then went to my room to rest, and there I found him. He began again to strike me with a knotted rope, and wanted me to listen to him while he suggested wickedness. I said no, and he struck me even harder, knocking my head violently against the ground. At a certain point, it came to my mind to invoke Jesus' Father "Eternal Father, through the most precious blood of Jesus, free me!"

"I then don't quite know what happened. That contemptible beast dragged me from my bed and threw me, hitting my head against the floor with such force that it pains me still. I became senseless and remained lying there until I came to myself a long time afterwards. Jesus be thanked!"

But she kept her faith in Jesus. She even used humor against the devil. She wrote this to a priest: "If you would have seen him, when he fled making faces, you would have burst out laughing! He is so ugly!.... But Jesus told me not to be afraid of him.

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Most of us will never have experiences like St Pio or St. Gemma but that does not mean that Satan is leaving you alone. When you feel your Peace leaving you due to an argument or misunderstanding, remember to ask Jesus to help regain the grace of Peace.

In many of the Gospels passages, we see Jesus greet his apostles with "Peace be with you". Let us follow Him. Let Peace reign in our hearts.



Pope Francis Talks About the Devil and the Peace of Christ

Starting with his very first homily as the bishop of Rome, Pope Francis has regularly reminded believers that the Devil is real, that we must be on guard, and that our only hope against him is in Jesus Christ. Christ wants you to have His Peace in your soul and the Devil is trying to take it from you.

Here are 13 of Pope Francis' most direct quotes on the matter.

1) "When one does not profess Jesus Christ, one professes the worldliness of the devil." *First homily, 3/14/2013* –

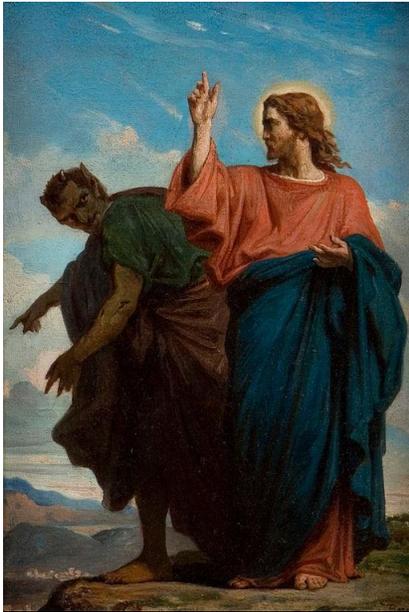
2) "The Prince of this world, Satan, doesn't want our holiness, he doesn't want us to follow Christ. Maybe some of you might say: 'But Father, how old fashioned you are to speak about the devil in the 21st century!' But look out because the devil is present! The devil is here... even in the 21st century! And we mustn't be naïve, right? We must learn from the Gospel how to fight against Satan." *Homily on 4/10/2014* –

3) "[The Devil] attacks the family so much. That demon does not love it and seeks to destroy it. [...] May the Lord bless the family. May He make it strong in this crisis, in which the devil wishes to destroy it." *Homily, 6/1/2014* –

4) "It is enough to open a newspaper and we see that around us there is the presence of evil, the Devil is at work. But I would like to say in a loud voice 'God is stronger.' Do you believe this, that God is stronger?" *General audience, 6/12/2013* –

5) "Let us ask the Lord for the grace to take these things seriously. He came to fight for our salvation. He won against the devil! Please, let us not do business with the devil! He seeks to return home, to take possession of us... Do not relativize; be vigilant! And always with Jesus!" *Homily, 11/8/2013* –

6) "The presence of the devil is on the first page of the Bible, and the Bible ends as well with the presence of the devil, with the victory of God over the devil." *Homily, 11/8/2013* –



7) "Either you are with me, says the Lord, or you are against me... [Jesus came] to give us the freedom... [from] the enslavement the devil has over us... On this point, there are no nuances. There is a battle and a battle where salvation is at play, eternal salvation. We must always be on guard, on guard against deceit, against the seduction of evil." *Homily, 10/11/2013*

8) "The devil plants evil where there is good, trying to divide people, families and nations. But God... looks into the 'field' of each person with patience and mercy: he sees the dirt and the evil much better than we do, but he also sees the seeds of good and patiently awaits their germination." *Homily, 7/20/2014 -*

9) "The devil cannot stand seeing the sanctity of a church or the sanctity of a person, without trying to do something." *Homily, 5/7/2014 -*

10) "Note well how Jesus responds [to temptation]: He doesn't dialogue with Satan, as Eve did in the terrestrial Paradise. Jesus knows well that one can't dialogue with Satan, because he is so cunning. For this reason, instead of dialoguing, as Eve did, Jesus chooses to take refuge in the Word of God and to respond with the power of this Word. Let us remind ourselves of this in the moment of temptation...: not arguing with Satan, but defending ourselves with the Word of God. And this will save us." *Angelus address, 3/9/2014 -*

11) "We too need to guard the faith, guard it from darkness. Many times, however, it is a darkness under the guise of light. This is because the devil, as saint Paul, says, disguises himself at times as an angel of light." *Homily, 1/6/2014 -*

12) "Behind every rumor there is jealousy and envy. And gossip divides the community, destroys the community. Rumors are the weapons of the devil." *Homily, 1/23/2014 -*

13) "Let us always remember... that the Adversary wants to keep us separated from God and therefore instills disappointment in our hearts when we do not see our apostolic commitment immediately rewarded. Every day the devil sows the seeds of pessimism and bitterness in our hearts. ... Let us open ourselves to the breath of the Holy Spirit, who never ceases to sow seeds of hope and confidence." *Speech, 6/18/2013*

Little Humor Section

Baptism in the eyes of a baby....



¹Our Lady of Medjugorje Message Sept 25, 2017

Dear children! I am calling you to be generous in renunciation, fasting and prayer for all those who are in temptation, and are your brothers and sisters. In a special way I am imploring you to pray for priests and for all the consecrated, that they may love Jesus still more fervently; that the Holy Spirit may fill their hearts with joy; that they may witness Heaven and Heavenly mysteries. Many souls are in sin, because there are not those who sacrifice themselves and pray for their conversion. I am with you and am praying that your hearts may be filled with joy. Thank you for having responded to my call."

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Our mission statement is to motivate people to pray and to be Christian examples in their work, home and with others, for those needing the Light in a world of Darkness.

St. Paul Ministry, Cypress, TX

¹ The Catholic Church has not made a ruling on Medjugorje to date.