

Father Livio: Lent: Satan Stronger Than Ever Before - 18/02/2026

Dear friends of Radio Maria, good day to everyone. It is 8:53 AM on Wednesday, February 18, 2026. Peace and joy to all of you, dear friends listening, and may the light from the Word of God guide our steps throughout this day on the path of truth, goodness, and peace.

Today, dear friends, Lent begins in the Roman Rite, while in some other places, it starts next Sunday. Therefore, I would like to begin this Lent with an editorial, a special editorial to which I have given this title: **Satan is stronger now than ever.**

This expression, "stronger now than ever," was said twice by the Madonna in recent years. But even at the beginning of the new millennium, the Madonna used very strong expressions to indicate the activity of Satan, which characterizes the first great eschatological and theological battle described in Revelation, chapter 12: the dragon's attack on the woman and her child. We are in this context, as taught by Saint John Paul II, and the Madonna, at the beginning of the century, on January 1, 2000, called Satan "loosed from his chains."

She said, "Now that Satan is loosed from his chains, consecrate yourselves in a particular way to my heart and to the heart of my Son, Jesus." Then the Madonna repeated many times and emphasized the strength of Satan, although sometimes she pointed out that it is a false strength, meaning a false strength in the face of the strength of God, the power, and the omnipotence of God.

An example of this is on March 25, 2020, during the height of the COVID pandemic, when the Madonna said that Satan reigns. So, dear friends, this is the historical phase in which we live, which we have called the first great battle of the Apocalypse: the dragon attacks the woman and wants to devour her child, meaning the dragon is attacking the Church, wanting to destroy the Church and therefore the work of redemption.

But in the messages of Our Lady of Peace, we have a much broader scenario. The Madonna, starting with the first messages she gave in Medjugorje, emphasized the particular activity of Satan in our time. In truth, this was already widely predicted by mystics. Think of Pope Leo XIII, who recommended praying the prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel at the end of Mass to defend the Church in the great battle.

And of the Church, this activity of Satan, which can be seen in this progressive rebellion, especially in the West, against Christianity, which began with the Renaissance and gradually increased until it became a widespread factor. She said at its peak, "You have rejected the faith of the cross." So there was a progressive occupation of society by Satan and a progressive attack on the Church, which led the Madonna to say, "This is the hour of Satan." But she also said, "This is my hour, it is his hour," meaning that she, at this phase of history, is entrusted by her Son with the mission of defending the Church and humanity from Satan's attack.

Now, we have the grace of the messages of Our Lady of Peace, which in all these years has revealed to us the activity of Satan. Not the activity of Satan in an abstract sense, but his current activity, what he is doing now. The Madonna has shown it to us gradually in the messages from Medjugorje. They were all directed toward the activity of Satan against the parish. I also remember a particularly significant message in 1985, during the early years of the apparitions. I recall it was June 1985, and it was then that the Madonna said a message she never repeated.

She said that Satan had taken possession of part of her plan and had tasked the youth of Medjugorje to pray for this intention. In fact, later in September, the Madonna said in another message, which was collected from the parish site, that Satan's plan had collapsed. Over time, I explained to you, whenever I had the opportunity, what this very sophisticated activity of Satan was, trying to disrupt the Madonna's plan.

Then, the Madonna went further. After warning the parishioners about the activity of Satan, she warned the world, especially in the message that somewhat broke the boundaries of imagination, when on January 25, 1991, the year the Soviet Union was created, the Madonna said that Satan wants to destroy life, nature, and the planet on which you live. Since then, the Madonna has gradually shown us Satan's activity in her messages, warned us, and asked for prayers because we must fight against the evil one.

Dear friends, the Madonna has revealed to us what we do not see, what we cannot even imagine, dear friends. We can summarize the Madonna's messages in a few fundamental points to show how Satan's activity has an enormous scope. I would say that he has touched every key on his infernal keyboard, not leaving even one untouched. First of all, as the Madonna has revealed, he has put men at war with God.

That is, he has renewed the war against God, but specifying that it is a war against the faith, against Christianity. Indeed, dear friends, since the post-war period, especially at the popular level, although for the upper classes it began at least two centuries earlier, people have started to make efforts to emancipate themselves from Christianity and to destroy Christianity. This effort reached its peak with the new century when the Madonna said that Satan had been loosed from his chains. This attack against the faith is ongoing, and we can see it in the crisis of the West. This is the reason why the Madonna came to the forefront by appearing in Međugorje. One of the first messages she gave, when asked by the friars what they should say to the people, was: "They should protect the faith of the people, protect the faith of the people."

In other words, the Madonna intervened for this purpose, to protect the faith, because Satan's attack was precisely what he succeeded in achieving in the West, as we know. Now we talk about empty churches, but they are a stark reality. We do not realize the difference between the churches after the war, even in the years following, which on Sundays were overflowing, compared to what it is now, where it is actually difficult to fill the pews.

It requires a lot of space, but unfortunately, there are few people. This is the reality, dear friends, that affects much of the West. In truth, it is not the same for the new churches, those in Africa and Asia, but for the churches in the West, it is like this. I say "the Church" because if someone does not go to receive the Eucharist, we must ask: where is their faith? And if their faith is no longer there, even if some people say, "I am a believer, but I don't go to church," it's like saying, "I go to lunch, but I don't eat." Dear friends, then it's better not to go at all, simply put.

So, dear friends, we can say that the most malevolent work of Satan, the first malevolent work of Satan that we see before our eyes, is the dissolution of faith in the countries of ancient Christianity. The Madonna is here to rebuild faith. To rebuild faith, we can say that the work of Mary has, in fact, prevented the total dissolution of Christianity, the dissolution of Christian faith because of modernism. Because it is impossible to completely erase faith, but it can be reduced to something intangible, and so this is possible. This was the mission assigned to modernism, which denies the supernatural, and by denying the supernatural, it denies the object of faith. The object of faith is the supernatural world, it is God, the object of faith is Christ, it is the Word of God, the entire supernatural world we know: the Virgin Mary, the angels, the saints, every form of manifestation of the supernatural comes into the life of God.

This is the ideology of modern times, modernism, and this also explains the harshest messages the Madonna has ever given against modernism, directly linking it to Satan and saying that modernism — that is, the sophisticated and elegant dissolution of faith which practically reduces it to nothing — this is Satan's work in our time. Christianity is thus reduced to a human symbol, and even the devil is reduced to a symbol. In reality, there is only matter, and there is only this world, and nothing else. And who said this? It was said by Satan. And then he put a gag on many scientists and communicators, feeding them like a mother feeds her child, spoon-feeding them modernism every day, and that's how they modernized us. They modernized us, they made us grow a cataract on our eyes so that we can no longer see the supernatural, and this is the drama of faith today. It is a grave drama because people live like animals and die worse than animals. In fact, they

live worse than animals and die worse than animals and don't even have... because evidently, the educated, modern man cannot humble himself to believe in God.

In short, I remember the Madonna's words, "Satan is mocking you, and I cannot help you because you have distanced yourselves from my heart." This is the harsh reality, dear friends, of the world we live in — a world where people live like animals, perhaps in a slightly more sophisticated way, but the horizon is that of the material world. That's all there is. And so, along with faith, morality has also been abolished. The Ten Commandments have been abolished. Apart from human laws, which, in any case, must regulate society and social life by imposing norms of behavior — such as "do not kill, do not steal," otherwise the world would become a hell — but overall, dear friends, the commandments are reduced to human conventions, to behavioral conventions. They refer to human laws that can often change. Therefore, many of the fundamental moral principles of the commandments are denied.

For example, consider the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." Abortion, which is a crime, as stated in Vatican II, is presented as an inalienable right, perhaps to be written into a country's constitution. So, there is a rejection of faith, but also, as it were, a construction of a morality that is a mere convenience of behavior, but does not reflect the law of God. It makes no reference to God. It is a human convention that people can change at their convenience. And so, in fact, if we ask a young person who has done catechism, received their First Communion, and Confirmation, to name the Ten Commandments, they will struggle to recall them all. Try this test if you can. At my age, we used to sing all the commandments, all the sacraments, and all the Church's precepts. Now, they aren't even taught anymore because they are considered something a bit strange: commandments, sacraments, precepts of the Church. It's all stuff that, in some way, has been put in the laundry. And after washing it, it's still the same.

And what we will receive from the Eternal Father will be a purification that will make us sweat a lot. So, dear friends, this is the reality we face: a world that no longer has a firm reference point in faith, no longer has a firm reference in morality, no longer has the Church. Well, it has the Church, but how many are truly part of it, who speak in the name of God, who guide the faithful in the name of God, in the name of Christ?

So, there is a real demolition of Christianity in its doctrinal content, in its moral content, and in its visible reality, which is the Church. When people try to give certificates of goodwill to the Church, they are far from recognizing what the Church truly is — the presence of God in this world, the presence of Christ in this world. They try to transform it into an NGO, that is, the modern world, the world of today. This was the mentality of those who created the European Constitution, the New Europe. As St. John Paul II commented, it was considered merely an organization, like any union or NGO. So, the Christian Europe, which still has a Christian majority of faithful and a glorious past, can be said to be selling its Christian future. The Church in the European Constitution was ignored, because it depends on who is in power, who is in government.

So, dear friends, these are the visible fruits, the great conquests of Satan, we can say. If he were to be compared to Napoleon, he has won far more. There's no doubt. He has de-Christianized all of the West, or much of it. If the Madonna had not intervened, Satan would have wiped out the faith completely. If it weren't for the Madonna, he would have already brought the world to destruction, to self-destruction.

So, dear friends, Satan has put men at war with God, abolished the faith in the countries of ancient Christianity, and set men at war with each other. It is clear that the conflicts in Europe, after many years of peace following World War I, led to a new European war. There is no doubt that Russia's invasion, which currently concerns Ukraine, is part of an imperialist plan that could — in fact, will — very likely lead to World War III, God forbid. But this is the path that Satan has led us down. He has managed to break through and win on all fronts, and it would have been much worse, much more grave, with far larger wounds inflicted upon Christianity, and much greater spoils for Satan, if it weren't for the Madonna.

Then, on a more personal level, what did Satan do regarding the Christian faith? He imposed his atheistic and materialistic vision of life. He imposed what we rightly call modernism — a view of life where the supernatural doesn't exist, and only what we see, touch, and experience exists. Thus, only man exists, God does not exist, God's law does not exist, and the afterlife does not exist. These are all concepts we have assimilated, and they have become our way of acting, of seeing, of thinking, and of moving.

So, dear friends, when I was a boy, they would ask me, "Who is man?" I would answer, "Man is a being composed of body and soul." But if you ask a young child today, "Who is man?" he will give you the answer that some philosopher, I don't remember which, tried to give: "Man is a bird without feathers, an animal without feathers."

I don't know, tell me, what is man? I remember that during the time of Covid, certain scientists and certain scientists who wrote articles for big newspapers boasted of saying, in the end, that we are animals. I once got so angry, I was reading the newspapers at the time, and I said, "Madam, maybe you're an animal? I'm not an animal. Maybe you're an animal?" I mean, it was already common language that we are animals. So, great scientific progress, philosophical progress, and whatever other labels they want to throw out — this is it. Satan, in our time, has succeeded in turning the human person into an animal, reduced to a hairless monkey, maybe with a little bit of hair left, but that's the human person, a hairless monkey, a monkey without glasses. Call it what you want, but not much different from a monkey. What would a human being be, reduced to an animal, reduced to a pile of phosphate, a handful of dust? Tell me, hasn't Satan been mocking us? He laughed in our faces. He spit in our faces. Understand? We, obedient to his impulses, have come to define ourselves as a pile of phosphates.

This is an expression I remember more than once, maybe it was Paschal who said it, friends, so he destroyed man, he destroyed the human person, he destroyed the family, he destroyed the family. I see, I know, if there's still anyone getting married, let me know, but I see that the sacrament of marriage no longer exists, neither on a natural level nor on a religious level. I mean, people don't get married, neither in the town hall nor in church. Or at least less and less, and it's always less common to imagine life in a family. Less and less do people perceive the purpose of creation, that God created man and woman to cooperate in mutual love with a pact of love.

"Follow me," they say, live alone, or at least in such a way as not to limit one's freedom and always with the possibility to do whatever one likes: leave one person and go wherever you want, leave the other and go wherever you want, with no ties. And so, we are reduced to dry leaves that the wind sweeps here and there. But the Madonna said it, this attack of Satan on the family, she said that the family is under attack. Do you see it? With what difficulty even young people think about marriage and think about starting a family? There is no saint that can help. We must beg on our knees for them to have children, and even if they conceive them...

Or, many times, they just get twisted. This is a reality that causes many states to shed tears because they are only decreasing. This applies to China, Russia, and many other countries, including ours. On the other hand, we are forced to import people, let's call things as they are, because otherwise, we create gaps that can't be filled.

As for work, social life, and many activities, where is the root of all this? It is the work of dissolution that Satan has done to the family, to the human person, to the family unit. What we see before our eyes is that he has stirred people against each other, so human life is increasingly becoming a continuous war, but not just in the way we've seen in recent years in Europe, in Ukraine, and the Middle East, brutal wars, no doubt. But the war isn't just in these events. Today, the war is daily.

We are all angry, we are all ready to turn against each other, with envy, jealousy, slander, defamation, and every kind of injustice. Why is this? Because inside, we are evil, because inside, Satan has entered

us, he has planted his spirit in us, he has poisoned us, and we have become in his image. And being in his image, we get tangled up like serpents. Dear friends, we are far from being the image of Mary and therefore from being brothers and sisters, as the Christian vocation is. This is precisely it, dear friends.

Now, I've painted for you this fresco, which is obviously concerning, and not concerning in a way where we can say that this fresco I've described, which has been unfolding decade after decade since the post-war era, is telling you about Satan's advance in the world — determined to destroy the work of creation and redemption, determined to transform the world into his kingdom, or to turn the world into hell. We must say that those who resist are relatively few, those who are unaware are relatively few. The Madonna has described all this in her messages, but we struggle to understand. We struggle to understand because we no longer even believe in the devil. Not only do we not believe in God, but we don't believe in the Evil One either. We have downgraded him to a symbol, but he is a personal, perverted, and perverting being, as the great Pope Paul VI hinted. He has dragged, and is dragging, the world into a war against God — a war that drags the world into the denial of faith in God and exalts man to the point where men, who are arrogant and want to prevail, do so by making war against one another and destroying themselves.

This is what Satan has managed to build over these decades, dear friends. **That's why the Madonna said, "Satan has never been so strong as he is now."**

So now we are heading towards this great battle, this great battle in which the Madonna will be the protagonist, because obviously, we cannot face it alone. We need special supernatural help, not just God's grace, but also the presence of the Madonna who descends from Heaven to Earth precisely for this great battle and to prepare us for it.

So, this is the fresco of the world in which we live. This fresco I've described is not an exaggeration. Because the roots of evil are so deep that they are unimaginable. We are not capable of understanding God's love in its fullness. By analogy — I don't say the same way, but by analogy — we are also incapable of understanding the hatred of Satan in its fullness.

... The abyss of evil, we do not comprehend, because something good is still left in us. We have not yet become devils, even though we may be getting closer to reproducing their images, because we are not fighting the spiritual battle for good, obviously, but we have not yet... By God's grace, we have not yet sunk into the laws of evil.

When we do, then we will know the depths of evil, and it will be a horrible thing. But for us who have faith, we can clearly say that evil is something horrible. I tell you this, dear friends, because we tend to minimize evil. We get used to it, like when someone becomes accustomed to the bad smell in a house — they no longer notice the stink. We are so immersed in evil that we no longer smell the stench of evil. However, evil has grown. The Madonna has said this many times. For example, when people at Medjugorje complained that four hours of prayer a day were too much, the Madonna would say, "Look around, look beyond your horizon."

See, see how sin abounds in the world, dear friends. When I talk about evil, I'm talking about sin, how it abounds, how it has become a tide, an ocean, an immense swamp in which we are immersed, dear friends. This is the world in which we live, a world that has become pagan again, as the Madonna has said.

In this world, dear friends, there are Christians, yes, there are Christians, but Christians are in a context, in a situation, where it's not so easy to stay afloat. I mean, if you swim in a pond full of fish and dogs, the chances of getting away unscathed are very low. We live in a world where, how should I put it, I'm reminded of what St. Peter writes in his letter, right? When he talks about the devil, "your adversary goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." This is the world in which we live. The lion roars

because it's looking for someone to devour. And we find him in all the streets and alleys, maybe even in our own homes. Inside, we find the roaring lion that wants to devour us.

So today, dear friends, the fight against Satan is a fight that must engage us 24 hours a day. As St. Peter says, after saying what he said, he adds... "Be sober, be vigilant, resist him, standing firm in the faith."

I have described to you the world we live in, the great conquests of Satan, dear friends, and the presence of Mary to stop the tempter, the liar, and the murderer, who wants to lead the world to self-destruction. Because this is his goal: to destroy the work of creation and redemption.

... and they are ready to tear apart those they find. It's clear that we cannot go around so carefree in a neighborhood where lions roam, maybe even some serpents or other such dangers, because this is the reality, dear friends. The reality is this: it's not that we see Satan, but we see his friends, and they are many. And many times, they are just like him, or sometimes even worse than the devil.

So, dear friends, now, in this second part of our reflection, I would like to focus. We are in Lent, we are entering Lent, we are children of this time, we are called to this great battle of faith, we are called to this great battle against a formidable enemy, the devil, an immense army. What could we do on our own? We can do nothing on our own. We need, dear friends, to clothe ourselves with the armor of light, to clothe ourselves with faith, to clothe ourselves with the grace of God, with the power of God, with the strength of God, with the wisdom of God, with the discernment of God. We need, so to speak, to wake up from the tired sleep of our souls. We need to become aware of the world we live in, a world in which Satan reigns, in which Satan triumphs, in which Satan meditates victory, because he thinks... but he doesn't know that the great battle will not be crowned by his victory, but on the contrary, it will be determined by his defeat and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. But to be instruments of Mary's victory, dear friends, we need to, so to speak, change. We need to change, we need to convert.

First of all, we need to change our lives, we need to become Christians again. We need to become Christians again. But look, we have so worldly that we've forgotten what it means to be Christian. We have forgotten how people used to live as Christians. Even then, there were the bad ones, the wicked ones, the wicked ones, but the truth is we have forgotten about the world's worldliness, ignorance, the power of evil, and the dangers we are running. We don't even realize that we could, so to speak, be heading toward a general catastrophe because we are at the mercy of whom? We are at the mercy of whom? Look at the powerful ones who guide us, those at the head of human power, who prepare and deploy deadly weapons to annihilate humanity. Let us become aware of the danger we are in. Let us become aware of the importance of having true Christians, true witnesses, true soldiers, who are ready to testify to the faith. Because the Madonna doesn't need millions and millions of Christians, but she surely needs a few thousand. I don't know when the Madonna says, "only a small number," but I don't know if this small number is a few dozen, a few hundred, a few thousand, I don't know. But for sure, this Lent, because even the time of the Sffletti is not far, it cannot be far, dear friends. The world will be radically different in ten years, or maybe it will take a few more years, I don't know. But this is the moment when we need to, so to speak, shift gears, and first of all, we must become aware of the situation we find ourselves in and become aware of the dangers that are looming over us.

Look, if we don't dedicate ourselves to prayer, if we don't commit ourselves, the world absorbs us, it dirties us, it absorbs its thoughts, it gives us its feelings, and we transform into walking corpses like most people today. So we need to become aware, dear friends, that a life far from God, from the commandments, the sacraments, and the faith, is an existentially dangerous situation. Dangerous because without conversion, we risk eternal death, we risk hell. Because without conversion, living at the mercy of the devil, who captures his prey, grabs us, binds us, and takes us to the place where he lives — these are the eternal truths I tell you. When we are in mortal sin, consolidated mortal sin, we

are prisoners of Satan, we belong to him, and he does with us as he pleases. Without the prayers of saints, good people, without the light of grace and repentance of sins, we cannot save ourselves.

Look, the considerations I make today, I know, are rare, but they are the ones the Church has taught us for two millennia, they are the ones that made saints for two millennia, the catechists, the preachers. To live in mortal sin, far from faith, from prayer, from the commandments, and the sacraments, means exposing ourselves to eternal perdition. The Madonna also says these things in elegant ways because that's how she is, she always finds the right words, but they are also heavy. When she says, "Modern man does not want God and is heading toward perdition." What does she say? "You have abandoned God, and you are in the sea of oblivion that will lead you to hell." It's the same thing.

... the concept is the same. So, we must start over, we must be reborn, we must begin thinking as Christians have thought for two millennia. That is, without God, without prayer, without commandments, without sacraments, we risk being reaped by the devil.

This is an expression from the Queen of Peace when she said, "Today, Satan is reaping souls." "Today, Satan is reaping souls," she said. We must understand that, by living as we do today, in a world where grave sins abound even in daily life, and living in that existential state of sin, people rarely die asking for the sacraments, asking for confession, asking for the viaticum. So, do you think the Madonna exaggerates when she says that today Satan reaps souls?

And when she said, in the early months of her messages in Medjugorje, she said, "Today, the greatest number of souls, when they die, go to purgatory, but an equally large number go to hell. Only a small number go directly to heaven." Do you think the Madonna came from heaven to earth to tell us what? To tell us something untrue? She came because she is a mother who knows that children who go to hell are lost forever. The same thing she had said at Fatima — when she said many souls go to hell.

We live in this context, dear friends, of unawareness of the daily toll that Satan takes. And I must say, I say this with sadness, that although the Madonna repeats it... We don't repeat these things. Rarely do you hear in a sermon that with mortal sin, one goes to hell, but it is written in the Catechism. In the new Catechism, it is written that if someone dies in a state of mortal sin, they go to hell. Now, are these true things? Yes, they are true. Do you know why they are true? Because someone who rejects God remains without God, and hell is the existential condition of someone who has rejected God. It's that dry branch, as Jesus said in the parable of the vine and the branches, that is taken and thrown into the fire because it is its destiny. And being dry, it is placed in the fire to burn.

So, I tell you these things. **They are difficult for our souls.** Because in this Lent, we must become aware that we live in a world where it is easy to lose the soul. We live in a world where it is difficult to think about God, about His commandments. It's difficult to live in prayer, it's difficult, so to speak, to cultivate the holiness of life.

Even in the church, it's not always easy. It depends on the parish you find, on the priest you meet. But, still, we are responsible for our own souls. Each of us must first think about their own soul. Then, when you have thought about your own, think about the souls of others as well. Therefore, one, if they think about their soul, must repent for their sins. They must repent for their sins.

... of the ten commandments in light of the ten commandments. He must repent of his sins, resolve not to commit them again, confess them, receive absolution, and then resume the Christian life by observing all the commandments and all the sacraments. There's confession, communion, and marriage. It's a sacrament that is about to be abolished, even. I don't know if marriage still counts, but we're joking now. But did you know that for two baptized people, marriage in church is an obligation? It's an obligation because for two baptized people, marriage becomes a sacrament that

symbolizes the love relationship between Christ and the Church. We need to rebuild everything, dear friends.

Look, it's not enough to have a generalized, hasty repentance to go to heaven. I don't know if it's enough to save the soul, I don't know. Because it's clear that the devil, when he keeps someone deceived, numb, and unable to act as we are, has an advantage. This is a theological truth. That is, we are incapable of choosing conversion when we are in a state of mortal sin.

We need a special grace from God, which is why we must pray for sinners. Therefore, we are in a condition where we must think about our own soul, and this is especially because we face perspectives where it will not be easy to save our souls. It will not be easy, but we need to have sensitive "antennas" towards the supernatural world, towards the impulse of grace, and towards God's call, the graces God gives us.

So, dear friends, I'd like to, since I can't go on for too long, very briefly outline the steps we must take during this Lent to arrive at Easter as new, renewed creatures. The first step, dear friends, is to realize that we are in a dangerous world. A world dangerous for the soul, first and foremost. Because it's a world that seduces us, leads us away from God, and brings us to practical atheism, which abolishes the commandments, and puts man in place of God. In short, it's the carnival of Pinocchio's world. It's the carnival of vanity.

The second point is that we must reflect on the consequences of sin.

Look, repeated mortal sins, especially the most serious ones that involve the fifth and sixth commandments, and where there are so many forms of deviation and immorality today, accumulate and create... it's like a body with cancer that grows.

Then it's difficult to recover. Something absolutely extraordinary is needed for a heart where Satan has entrenched himself to open up. So, don't prolong a life of sin, don't delay conversion, don't delay confession this Lent. Because when the soul is lost, it's lost forever.

Then, dear friends, we live in a world full of temptations. What is temptation? Temptation is a satanic trick, which Satan studies, like studying our worldly appetites, our capital vices, the hungriest mouths, and he prepares a bait to give us. Because by eating it, thinking it will make us happy, by eating it, we become his slaves. We practically lose the grace of God, lose the divine presence, and become slaves of the devil through mortal sin.

Therefore, be ready with discernment to recognize the temptations with which Satan drags you into ruin, and be ready to turn away from what Satan offers you. Don't do like Eve, who started talking to Satan. Eve should have turned away, looked up to heaven, and turned her eyes away from the fruit Satan showed her. Instead, she wanted to look at it and comment on it—and she died. She lost grace and dragged everyone down with her.

Then, dear friends, if we are in a state of mortal sin, don't forget that God is good, that God is ready to forgive us, that if we even have a little opening of the heart to ask for His help, He will gladly give us the grace of repentance, He will give us the grace to open our hearts, He will give us the grace to understand His great mercy. Because, look, sin hardens the heart, like that of David. After his sin and adultery, he became insensitive. Then God intervened and sent the prophet Nathan. When Nathan opened his eyes, David cried out, "From the depths, I cry to You, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice." And so should we, dear friends. From the depths of our iniquities, let us cry to God, asking for forgiveness, His mercy.

Then we ask... see, as I underline, everything happens with prayer. That is, we ask for the strength to resist and fight in spiritual combat.

... And if we fall, be humble enough to confess again. Because as we, so to speak, train in spiritual combat, the more we train, the stronger we become, the more victorious we are. Even if we fall, we get back up, realizing our weakness and therefore the importance of asking for God's grace. If we enter into this dynamic, in the end, we will prevail. That is, eventually, the moment comes when we remain stable in good and no longer fall into evil, no longer give in to temptation. So, dear friends, let's enter into this process, I say this because it's been so long since you've confessed, especially if you're in this condition and can't get out of it.

Place yourself before the cross and ask Jesus for the grace to decide, the grace to make a decision. That is, the grace to want to change your life, the grace to want to confess and then to do so. And then, dear friend, when you do, you will see that it will be the tears of joy, when you are freed from the evil one and his chains, when you feel the lightness of the life of grace, the lightness of your heart, when you feel the smile of God upon your life. Then, dear friend, that is when you must make your Christian life plan. A life of prayer, of observance of the commandments, and of drawing grace from the sources of the sacraments, especially... which is an important thing. Remember well that fasting is very important. The fasting that the Church asks us for, that the Madonna asks us for, even bread and water, is important, but it is properly oriented towards a higher goal.

Indeed, the Madonna has said clearly that fasting, with its final goal, is renunciation—renouncing something, various renunciations, because fasting is renunciation. By taking bread and water on Fridays during Lent, you renounce other things, but this renunciation is aimed at a much higher renunciation. That is, these renunciations must enable your will to renounce sin and renounce worldliness in general. That is, we are in the world but not of the world. We are in the world, but not of the world. Let's get out of worldliness, the thoughts of the world, the habits of the world, from the triviality of the world, from the dirtiness of the world. Without being... for heaven's sake, with the utmost humility, however, dear friends, let's not go into the mud because we get dirty, let's remember that. Let's not frequent the places of sin, let's not go to the carnival of vanity.

We have left the churches, the Blessed Sacrament, we have left the places of prayer to fill ourselves with worldliness. And what have we gained? Have you become happy? I don't know. I can tell you, as far as I'm concerned, that I am a happy person, even though in this editorial, I have tried to open my eyes to myself and to you. To where a life of sin and worldliness leads us. When the Madonna tells us that a simple and clean life, a simple and clean life, allows us to taste a little bit of heaven here on this earth, dear friends. So, let us fast, yes, but always with the goal of renouncing worldliness and, above all, of renouncing sin. And so, dear friends, if we make this spiritual journey, by Easter, we will be people who will participate in the resurrection of Christ. We will be full of His glory, His light, His peace, His joy, dear friends. We will be ready to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, to be people who polarize many souls around themselves and lead them to God.

I remember, I will never forget, an expression that Cardinal Ratzinger said, if I'm not mistaken, right before entering the conclave in which he was elected Pope. Cardinal Ratzinger said that everything we will bring to God when we die are the souls we have saved.

He was not talking about bishops, cardinals, or priests, but it applies to all Christians. Everything that we will truly bring to God in the afterlife are our own souls and the souls we have saved. Everything else counts for nothing. And he said, including the books we have written, because he had written quite a few, and of course, they count because they became instruments of evangelization. But in the end, what matters are the souls we have saved, and it starts with the salvation of our own soul.

So, after having made a good Lenten journey, what do we have left to do? We have to consolidate our Christian life in daily perseverance, we have to consolidate, so to speak, the foundations of the faith, because we may enter the time of secrets, but we must do so united to God, united to Christ, united to Mary, so that we can be instruments of victory for ourselves and for others.

Well, dear friends, this is what I wanted to tell you as an introduction to Lent. The enemy is Satan, the poison we need to free ourselves from is sin. Let us prepare for a renewal of spiritual life, let us arrive at Easter ready for a new life of resurrection and joy.