

charity? Is the one less important than the other? Indeed, is it not the queen of virtues? No sooner are you tempted by the sin of gluttony than you are at once alarmed but if feelings of aversion, bitterness, rancor, etc. spring up in your heart, you are not alarmed and you do nothing to mitigate them, but you support and encourage them. Why do you not reject them at once? Evil is always evil. Reject it as soon as it appears, whatever it is.



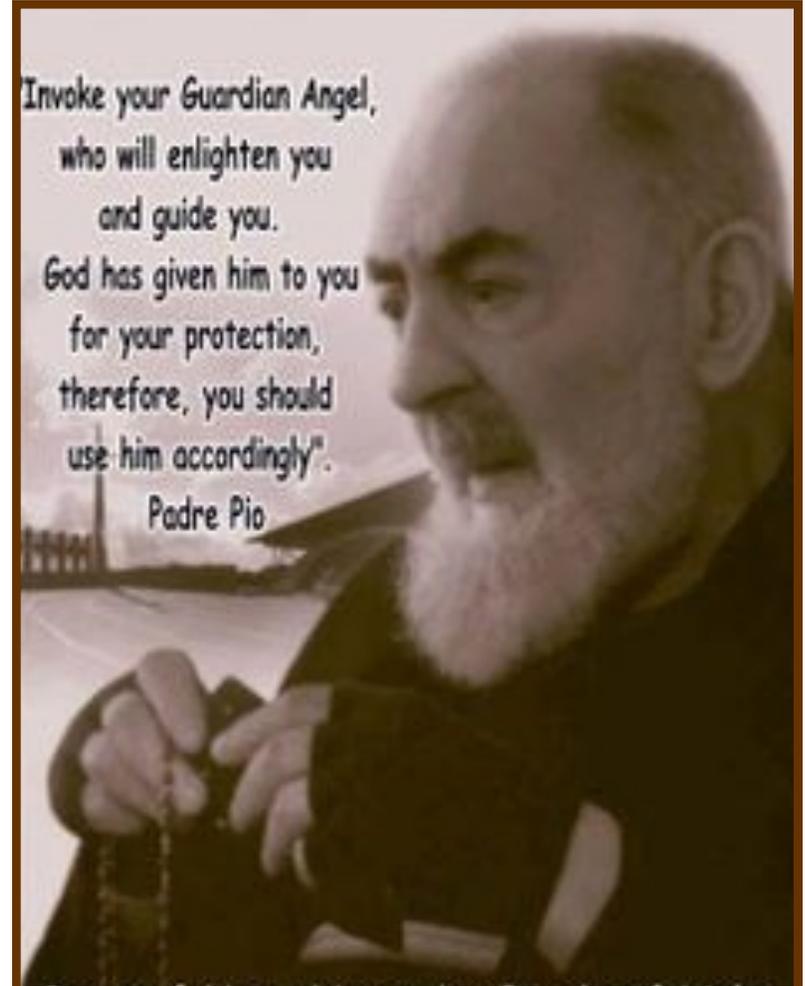
PRAYER IS ALWAYS THE BEST REJECTION TO TEMPTATIONS

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Padre Pio and Spiritual Formation

Article 4

Temptations Against The Faith



Invoke your Guardian Angel,
who will enlighten you
and guide you.
God has given him to you
for your protection,
therefore, you should
use him accordingly".
Padre Pio

**THE ROSARY IS THE BEST WEAPON AGAINST
TEMPTATION !**

Padre Pio and Spiritual Formation

Padre Pio described his spiritual director, Padre Benedetto Nardella, as the man who "formed" him. Here are some of Padre Benedetto's teachings on the Christian life.

Article 4

Temptations Against The Faith

Unfortunately, temptations against the Faith are the most frightening. In the others there is God in whom we believe, invoke and to whom we cling; but in this temptation we feel a complete void and we are denied the resource of weeping and hoping in the Supreme Good.

Do not think though that it is easy to consent to it. The very fear is an obstacle to the consent. All I ask is that you do not argue with Satan. He knows more than you do and he is such a clever and terrible Sophist than you cannot imagine. In the frequent attacks, make a supreme effort to gather your intelligence, will and sentiment and say: "I believe, what I have always believed and will always believe with the holy Church."

Then console yourself by persuading yourself that this kind of temptation does not usually last long.

Self-Love

Consider self-love as the most ugly and principal enemy. It is more terrible and fatal than Satan. In fact Satan can oppress, influence by means of suggestion and incite the soul to evil, but he cannot kill it with sin; but self-love can. Therefore when you feel it, make the sign of the cross, draw yourself up resolutely for battle and be on the alert. Yes, be on guard, because the dangers, the surprises and the treacheries are ready and waiting at every moment.

Now it strikes unexpectedly, then it seduces and enchants; if it gives up, it is only to provoke; if it falls, it rises and begins again. It obscures everything: justice with terror, goodness with conceit. It poisons everything: virtue with vanity, a downfall with despair. It facilitates suspicion, and prevents hope. When it is opposed it makes an uproar and if flattered it exalts itself.

Is it therefore impossible to crush and eliminate it?

No, with the grace of God it is not impossible; but it is necessary to fight with untiring patience, certain that the harder the fight becomes, greater is the hope of an imminent triumph.

At least, do not give up the fight as it is very pleasing to God to see that you have understood what it is and treat it as it deserves.

The subtle tenacity of self-love causes one to complain. But since you complain of it, it is neither a defect or an imperfection. Tolerate it or rather tolerate yourself. Our Lord gladly sympathizes with whoever has to put up with it. But in the heavenly home it will not be like this; this pressing attachment to ourselves will cease and we will exult, so says Scripture, only in Him, and in Him will we rejoice.

The clear knowledge of the merit of grace in our goodness will not permit us to be pleased with ourselves and divine condescension for us will be understood and praised as condescension. Indeed, seeing in that immense light all the patience and longanimity He used with us before our conversion and after, during the period of our slackness and right up to the end; seeing the infinite and loving compassion in repairing us poor mutilated and humiliated statues, the continual repair of damage caused by our wicked self-love, our only satisfaction will then be that of being a triumph of Mercy, even with all our good works.

Then will we say: "Lord, you wanted my good to comfort my desire of wanting it; and you wanted it even after the many times I did not want it, and to return to not wanting it. Oh, my God, you are the pious cultivator who does not tire of grafting live branches in a plant of little hope and who sees a few begin to grow after many failures. Therefore your untiring love is crowned in me. And oh, how sweet it will be to not be able to rejoice except in Him.

Incoherence

I beg you to avoid incoherence in devotion which delays perfection so much. To practice one virtue and overlook another, being diligent to the point of having scruples; to overcome one passion and allow entrance to another is definitely being eccentric. It is following your own inclinations and not faith and reason.

God wants you to avoid all sins and therefore you must be ready to fight them all.

Why, for example, are you so scrupulous with fasting and negligent with