

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, February 21, 2021**

**HEALTH CHECK**



When Sunday's Gospel tells us that "the Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days," it was not to do penance. Jesus was without sin. In the desert, Jesus reflected on his coming ministry and he rejected every temptation to be unfaithful to what God the Father expected of him.

Our Lenten self-assessment of our spiritual health might include asking ourselves the following questions:

Am I closer to God this Lent than I was last year, or does God have a diminished role in my thoughts and decisions?

Am I living as the child of God and faithful member of the Church that I promised to be when I renewed my baptismal promises last Easter?

How many minutes a week am I giving to prayer, to Mass, to the reading of scripture, and to the things of God, compared to the hours I give to streaming services, videogames, and social media?

How much of my money goes to satisfying my needs and to accumulating "stuff" I do not need, and how much goes into the collection basket and to charitable organizations?

Do I allow the sinful and immoral behaviors endorsed by society to infect my mind and to influence my decisions and actions?

During these months of the coronavirus pandemic, we have all learned the importance of checking our physical health. This Lent, may we better appreciate the importance of evaluating our spiritual health. For as Jesus tells us, only the spiritually healthy will see God. As he puts it, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Attentively at your service in our Lord,

Father John Carlos