

Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Gospel Matthew 8:28-34.
When Jesus came to the territory of the Gadarenes, two demoniacs who were coming from the tombs met him. They were so savage that no one could travel by that road. They cried out, "What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the appointed time?" Some distance away a herd of many swine was feeding. The demons pleaded with him, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of swine." And he said to them, "Go then!" They came out and entered the swine, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea where they drowned. The swineherds ran away, and when they came to the town they reported everything, including what had happened to the demoniacs. There upon the whole town came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him they begged him to leave their district.

Introductory Prayer:
Lord, I believe that you are present within me. I want to live this day close to you and see everything through the prism of faith. I want to put my trust and confidence in you. You will grant me all the graces I need today. All I have to do is ask. I want to love you with all my heart, especially in charity; giving myself to everyone I meet today so that I can communicate your love to them.

Petition:
Lord, help me defeat the evil of sin in my life.

1. Sin Keeps Us Away from God:
We learn in the catechism that mortal sin takes sanctifying grace away from our soul and cuts us off from God. Today's Gospel illustrates that separation, as the two possessed men keep their distance from Christ and want him to leave them alone. Our sin, whether mortal or venial, pushes God away from our lives. It is like telling him that we do not need him, that we do not want him in our lives. Have I willfully accepted sin in my life, thereby shunning God? Even in the slightest way?

2. Sin Hurts Our Relationships with Others:
Clearly the evil of the possessed men has hurt their relationship with their fellow men. They can no longer be a part of their community, but have to live apart from society. Every sin, in a way, is a "social sin" because it has social consequences. Even our most personal sins – in our thoughts – injure the Mystical Body of the Church, and so have an effect on others. Those sins that others see are even greater, because they cause

scandal and could lead others into sin. Christ is inviting us to reject sin. Let us join him and cast out the devil from our daily lives.

3. Sin Harms Us, Too:
The evil that we do is harmful above all to ourselves. The demoniacs often gashed and cut themselves. The physical injury to their bodies signifies a deeper spiritual affliction. Our souls are made for God, and so separation from him is truly heart-wrenching. Sin avoids presenting its ugly face, but after we have committed it, our conscience begins to bother us. Then we realize that our wrong choice has separated us from the One we are drawn to by nature. We feel the pain of separation and of that rupture which divides us interiorly.

Conversation with Christ:
Lord, help me to cast out sin from my life. I need your help, since I cannot do it on my own. Just like the demoniacs who longed to be freed from their torment, I also long to defeat sin in my life. So often I am overpowered by my passions or the temptations of the devil. Grant me the strength I need, Lord.

Resolution:
I will promise Christ that today I will reject one specific sin or imperfection that I usually fall into.