



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

### Fr. Danny Murphy – First Sunday of Lent – 2017

Here's a silly story that you probably have heard, but this is the only day of the year when you can tell this story, so here goes! A religion teacher asked the third grade: "What kind of food do you think Jesus would want when he hadn't eaten for forty days and forty nights?" One bright student answered: "FAST food!" – We better get right into the homily! If you haven't decided what you are going to do for Lent, or if you're open to expanding what you have decided what you're gonna do, then this homily might be just right for you. Don't you think that whatever we do for Lent that it should enrich our lives? A dear friend of mine has a serious drinking problem. He might not be an alcoholic, but he certainly drinks way too much. Each year, he gives up drinking for Lent, but as soon as Lent ends, he resumes his heavy drinking. So, his Lenten practice didn't enrich his life. Here are some suggestions that we might consider that will hopefully enrich not only our Lent, but also

will enrich our life. Our first reading this afternoon is the saddest story ever told. It's the story of the first sin. Why did Adam and Eve sin? What went wrong in the Garden of Paradise? What went wrong? Adam and Eve weren't grateful! That's what went wrong! They had so much, but they weren't satisfied! Is their story, my story? I am surrounded by God's gifts. Do I take them for granted or am I grateful for them? Am I rarely really happy? If you're looking to for something to do for Lent, for life – decide to be grateful! In our second reading, St. Paul tells us that despite our first parent's sins, and despite our sins, God's mercy brings us acquittal. The amazing thing about our acquittal, as St. Paul describes it, our acquittal comes when we're still sinners! With God, mercy comes before metanoia! With God forgiveness comes before repentance! God's pardon can't be earned, because it's already given! If you're looking for something to do for Lent, for life? Decide to accept God's unconditional forgiveness! The story of the three temptations in our Gospel today, really boils down to Jesus showing us how wholly he trusted his Father. His Father filled him. He didn't need food, approval; he didn't need power, glory; only his father. As St. Ignatius Loyola prayed many centuries later: "Give me only your love and your grace, O Lord, that's enough for me; your love and your grace are enough for me." If you are looking for something to do for Lent for life, decide to trust God totally in everything. Some more suggestions; for Lent and for life. Some years ago I read the story of an elderly man who lived about five hundred miles away from his daughter. Although his daughter called her dad regularly, she seldom came to visit him. One day her dad asked her; "Honey,

when I die will you come to my funeral?" She was deeply hurt by that question and she responded: "Dad, how could you ask such a thing?! Of course I will come!" Her father said, "Let's make a deal, why don't you visit me now instead, because I need you much more now than I will then!" If you're looking for something to do for Lent, for life, decide to examine your priorities. Decide to ask yourself what's really important in life. Back in the '60's there was a song by the Lovin' Spoonful called "Darling Be Home Soon." It's the story about this guy who's pining for his girlfriend to return to him. The last line of the song says this: "I miss the great relief of having you to talk to." Don't we all want someone that we can talk to? And yet there are so few people who are willing to listen – really listen. To really listen takes time. To really listen takes effort. To really listen takes humility. Listening is an act of love. If you're looking for something to do for Lent, for life, decide to listen! One more! Do you know that doctors believe that around 74 – 90 percent of all illness is in some way, somewhat related to stress. Why don't we follow the example of Pope Francis? Pope Francis has a statue of St. Joseph sleeping. Francis knows that much of God's guidance came to St. Joseph in dreams – when St. Joseph was sleeping. So what Pope Francis does, whenever he's stressed, he writes down on a piece of paper that which is worrying him, he puts that piece of paper under the statue of the sleeping St. Joseph, he goes to bed and he leaves it to God. If you're looking for something to do for Lent, for life, stop worrying, leave it to God. So, decide to be grateful, decide to accept God's forgiveness, decide to trust God, decide to examine your priorities, decide to listen, decide to stop worrying – for Lent and for life!