

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jul 7th 2018

HOW IS IT, THAT WE AND THE PHARISEES FAST ON MANY OCCASIONS, BUT NOT YOUR DISCIPLES?

John the Baptist lived an ascetical life in the desert. His disciples asked Jesus why he and his disciples didn't fast as much as they did. Jesus explained that his presence among them called for celebration and thanksgiving.

Indeed, we do not fast and mortify ourselves in order to suffer. Suffering and pain are not ends in themselves. We fast and pray for the sake of higher values — in order to discipline our appetites, to express solidarity with the hungry and poor, to be one with Jesus who suffers out of love for us all.

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