

Dear Padre,

After Mass, someone told me she overheard some people speaking wrongly about me. She defended me but wouldn't say what was said, or by whom. This troubles me. How should I deal with it?

First, consider why indulging in gossip is so prevalent. People leading uneventful lives often have an unhealthy interest in others' affairs, and they desire to gossip about it. Those who consider themselves to be poor conversationalists may gossip to feel important by imparting information that is seemingly in demand. Others resort to character assassinations out of jealousy or envy.

Because gossip easily spreads into a distortion of the truth, it can be, as Pope Francis said, "a plague more awful than COVID!" Some people permissibly spread gossip only when the truth of the rumor has been verified; for others, the truth of the matter is irrelevant. Regardless, when people gossip about us behind our backs—depriving us of our own input and version of the truth—we can feel victimized and defenseless.

Yet we aren't completely powerless. Just because something is perceived as the truth about us doesn't mean we have to accept it as such. (Nevertheless, in cases when we know what is said, we should honestly ask ourselves if there's any truth to it.) While we have no control over what people say about us, we can ultimately

decide how much attention a rumor deserves—and generally, the less time and energy we devote to rumors, the better we are!

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR
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Calendar

Monday

JUNE 27

Weekday

Am 2:6–10, 13–16

Mt 8:18–22

Tuesday

JUNE 28

St. Irenaeus,

Bishop and Martyr

Am 3:1–8; 4:11–12

Mt 8:23–27

Wednesday

JUNE 29

Sts. Peter and Paul,

Apostles

Acts 12:1–11

2 Tm 4:6–8, 17–18

Mt 16:13–19

Thursday

JUNE 30

Weekday

Am 7:10–17

Mt 9:1–8

Friday

JULY 1

Weekday

Am 8:4–6, 9–12

Mt 9:9–13

Saturday

JULY 2

Weekday

Am 9:11–15

Mt 9:14–17

Sunday

JULY 3

Fourteenth Sunday in

Ordinary Time

Is 66:10–14c

Gal 6:14–18

Lk 10:1–12, 17–20

or 10:1–9

**Do you have
a question for
the Padre?**

Go to DearPadre.org to send
your question and to learn
more about *Dear Padre*.

TRUE TOUCH LIFESTYLE / SHUTTERSTOCK



A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

When we see a mistake, a fault, a slip...usually the first thing we do is to go and recount it to others, to gossip...The great gossip is the devil, who always goes about saying bad things about others, because he is the liar who seeks to separate the Church, to distance brothers and sisters.

ANGELUS, SEPTEMBER 6, 2020

