

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus leads us into the desert. It is beautiful to reflect on this time that Jesus spent in the desert. John has just baptized Him in the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit descended on Him, and He heard the voice of the Father saying, **“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased”** (Luke 3:22). Then Spirit leads Jesus into the desert for forty days to be tempted (see Luke 4:1-2).

As we begin our forty days of Lent, we also will meet temptation. If you are anything like me, any time you intentionally give something up, you want it more than you did before you gave it up. You could go for days without thinking about it – until you decide to give it up... and then it is often on your mind! Jesus goes out expecting temptation, knowing He will meet it. He goes there because we go there. He is tempted because we are tempted. He experiences hunger, thirst, longing, lust for power, desire to be known, esteemed, praised – all because *we* experience these temptations.

And He conquers them.

He conquers them to show that it is possible to conquer them.

He conquers them to show us *how* we can conquer them – by relying not on yourself, but on God. Jesus said to St. Faustina: **“The cause of your falls is that you rely too much upon yourself and too little on Me. But let this not sadden you so much. You are dealing with the God of mercy”** (*Diary of St. Faustina* 1488). Jesus relies on Scripture and on His Father... and He conquers these temptations. Humility conquers Satan. Period.

There is a beautiful Litany of Humility (attributed to Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val), which has helped me in humility over the years. It has helped refocus my priorities on Jesus. I invite to you pray it, and pray it often, especially throughout Lent.

<b>Lord Jesus. Meek and humble of heart,</b>	<i>Hear me.</i>
<b>From the desire of being esteemed,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being loved,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being extolled,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being honored,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being praised,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being preferred to others,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being consulted,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the desire of being approved,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being humiliated,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being despised,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of suffering rebukes,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being calumniated,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being forgotten,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being ridiculed,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being wronged,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>From the fear of being suspected,</b>	<i>Deliver me, Jesus.</i>
<b>That others may be loved more than I,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That others may be esteemed more than I,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That others may be chosen and I set aside,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That others may be praised and I unnoticed,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That others may be preferred to me in everything,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>
<b>That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,</b>	<i>Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.</i>