

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



“Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus said...”

The Fathers of the Church said we should lift up our eyes for two reasons: either to help others, or to ask for help ourselves. Jesus often ‘lifts up his eyes’. When speaking to his disciples, for example, he never looks down at them, but looks up at them. Thus, he considers himself lower than them, he considers others superior to himself.

Today’s Gospel speaks of humility: the heart of Christianity. “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you...” None of this is possible without the Holy humility of Christ,

Someone who knew this very well was Cardinal Rafael Merry Del Val. Born of Spanish Diplomat parents while they were stationed overseas in London, he became a priest, bishop and then Cardinal. The ‘Merry’ in his surname comes from a line of Irish merchants from County Waterford, Ireland, who settled in Seville, Spain in the eighteenth century. Cardinal Merry Del Val wrote what has come to be known as the Litany of Humility, a prayer he used to say every day after Mass. I like to reprint it once a year in this column...

*O Jesus meek and humble of heart, Hear me.
From the desire of being esteemed, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being loved, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being extolled, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being honored, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being praised, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being preferred to others, Deliver me Jesus.
From the desire of being consulted, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being approved, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being humiliated, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being despised, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of suffering rebukes, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being calumniated, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being forgotten, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being ridiculed, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being wronged, Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being suspected, Deliver me, Jesus.*

*That others may be loved more than I, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I, Jesus grant me the grace to desire it.
That in the opinion of the world, others may increase, and I may decrease,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be chosen and I set aside, Jesus grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be praised and I unnoticed, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be preferred to me in everything, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may become holier than I, provided that I become as holy as I should,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

When we lift up our eyes today, may it be to look up to the Lord, or to seek to help others.

Fr. Sean