

Dear Brothers and Sisters



He was born in the Spanish Embassy in London, his parents, Sofia and Rafael Merry del Val being Spanish diplomats assigned to the UK at the time.

Baptized Rafael Merry Del Val, after his father; his surname 'Merry' came from a line of Irish merchants from County Waterford, who settled in the late 18th Century in Seville.

The child was educated by the Jesuits, was ordained a priest, and became a Cardinal. One of Cardinal Merry Del Val's prayers, known as the Litany of Humility, is an apt reflection on the Gospel we will hear at Mass today:

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 may become as holy as I should, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

We are invited to a Wedding banquet today. Truth is, none of like to be in the last place. All banquets have a top table, where the important are seated. Lesser mortals are relegated to the corner, seated near the toilets, or too close to the loudspeakers. Who wants to sit there?

And yet, that is exactly what Jesus does. And he gives us the possibility to do the same. Why? Because "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." Where will you sit at the wedding banquet today?

Fr. Sean