

“May our trust in the Lord be great, as He is rich in mercy” (St. Raphaela Mary)

Lord, grant us the grace to trust in your mercy at every step. Give us faith and strength to help us to bravely face all the temptations that invite us to live without You.



“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’” The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.” (Luke 4:1-13)

The Spirit led Jesus into the desert, but he never abandoned Him. He knew how to make Himself present in every firm response that Jesus gave to temptations. It was a moment of encounter, of strengthening in His own weakness, but above all a moment of confidence.

We can understand the Lenten desert as a spiritual path that we are invited to follow in order to return to the essential, to God. This path will offer us the possibility of depriving ourselves of our ego, of the things that are not essential in our lives, of what does not help us to move towards God.

The desert will make us experience our fragility and limitation, but with confidence we learn to keep ourselves in the attitude of trusting quest that allows us to meet personally with God, through sincere prayer, the merciful and repairing encounter with others and with a gaze on Easter, the promise of the Kingdom.

For this we must let ourselves be led by the Spirit: WE ARE NOT ALONE. There is room for hope. Our Father keeps inviting us to start over, he keeps talking about the Kingdom, the good news. He keeps knocking at our door; that is why it is still possible to convert, to continue listening to His voice, to receive his breath and to welcome His Spirit.

Help me to be silent, Lord, I want to hear your voice. Take my hand, guide me to the desert, let us find ourselves alone, You and me.

I need to find You, to walk together, to be quiet so You can talk. I put myself in your hands, help me to put aside the rush and worries that fill my head.

I am tempted by **security and activism** and I forget prayer and silence.

I am tempted by **inconsistency and appearance** when inside I have a lot to change.

I am tempted to **be the center and to have everything revolve around me**, to be served instead of serving.

I am tempted by **idolatry and fabricate an idol with my projects, my convictions, my conveniences**, to which I put your name of God.

I am tempted by **lack of commitment, to distract myself** from the cry of the fallen at my side.

I am tempted by **lack of sensitivity, for not having compassion and getting used** to others’ suffering and for having excuses, reasons and explanations that have nothing to do with Gospel, but that keep me happy.

I am tempted to **separate faith and life and not be outraged** by the lack of justice and lack of solidarity.

I am tempted by **discouragement**, and how difficult things sometimes appear; I am tempted by the lack of hope.

I am tempted to **believe that I hear You when I hear my voice**. Teach me to discern! Give me light to distinguish your face.

Take me to the desert of prayer, Lord. Discard what binds me, shake my certainties and test my love, so I can start again, humble, simple, with strength and Spirit to live faithful to You.