

**BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO BY HIS WOUNDS HAS RESTORED THE POWER OF  
BEAUTY IN OUR HEARTS**

**March 4, 2025- Feast of the Holy Face of Jesus – Jubilee Year of Hope**



God is beauty!!! Everything in Him is beautiful and communicates beauty... there is nothing in God that is not beautiful and does not create or begets beauty. Beauty, if we can even try to define it, is a combination of qualities like shape, color, order or form, that pleases the aesthetic senses; that in a mysterious way deeply attracts the inner desire for “beauty” that resides in our souls and calls us to understand that we are called to more...we are called to beauty.... Beauty is not only something to admire, but rather, it is essential to our existence, to our nature, to our creation. We were created out of love, for love and to love, which means we were created in and for beauty, for truth, and for goodness. Therefore, beauty has a profound relationship with who we are, with our deepest desires and our true dignity and greatness.

In the creation account, we see that God saw that the earth was without form and was empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep... the Spirit of God began moving over the face of the waters. And God said... “let there be light” and there was light. And He saw that the light was good... and He separated light from darkness.” (cf. *Gen 1*) From that first act of creating and ordering, giving form and shape, creating beauty... He continued His powerful act of creation... a work of His Heart and His hands... a beautiful, complete, and perfect act of love.... True beauty was manifested; for everything was made in the right shape, separated to bring order, with the perfect colors, and in the perfection of completeness. After He finished creating all things, He made the most powerful choice of love... for whom did He create all this? Who is to admire all this beauty? Whose life will be enveloped in all this beauty, like a mantle that wraps around a child? “So, He then said, “let us make man in our image and likeness, male and female he created them. And God blessed them and said: “be fruitful and multiply... I have given you everything that is upon the face of the earth”.” We can see that all things were created beautiful, orderly, and with completeness for the crown of creation: man and woman made in his image and likeness. Even in the creation of man, which transcended the other acts of creation, we see the Lord giving form, shape, order, completeness, and purpose. They were created from the ground and the Lord breathed life into them, His own life. They were made male and female, a separation that is complementary in their particular distinctions, and He gave them participation in the power to communicate life, to be cooperators of life. They even received a home, a beautiful, complete, perfect garden with fruits and water. Man and woman were the most beautiful and complete seal of His creative action.

Dear family, why am I writing about beauty and going back to the creation account? Simply because praying about the end of Isaiah 52 and 53, the “chapter on the Suffering Servant”, led me to understand how necessary it is to reflect upon the beauty of the Lord’s creation and his original designs as we begin the sacred season of Lent which culminates with the Passion of our Lord, his redemptive act, his work of recreation and making all things new, through His sacrifice on the Cross. I believe that we need to ponder more deeply certain verses of the prophetic descriptions of Isaiah to understand what the Redeemer of Men, the Man of Sorrows, obtained for us through His sufferings, His offering, His sorrowful Passion...

Why was He scourged all over His body? Why was His face so disfigured that he could hardly be recognized as human? Why was He taken to be slaughtered like a lamb? Why did He experience the agony of betrayal, rejection, and loneliness; of being spat upon, laughed at, mocked? Why was He condemned through malice, calumnies, envy, ambition, and manipulation? Why did He humbly and silently carry our sins upon Himself, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities? Why did He allow Himself to be taken to His martyrdom and sacrifice as a gentle Lamb...the true, pure, and unblemished Lamb to be offered on our behalf and for our salvation?

These are some of the many questions that the Holy Spirit can raise in our hearts when reading the Song of the Suffering Servant... the song of the suffering Lamb. Yes, the word “servant,” was also translated in Aramaic as lamb... One question that I believe the Lord desires us to contemplate with a renewed gaze because of our pastoral year: “I will give you a new heart... To give fruits of holiness”, is the fact that the most beautiful Face ever seen, the face of the Redeemer, was so disfigured that most people did not want to see Him... He was beyond human semblance. His disfigurement was so profound that it was hard to discover His human beauty... Why did He allow his Holy Face to be so disfigured to the point that beauty was wounded and deformed?



Let us read some of the verses of the Song of the Suffering Servant, Lamb... and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts about the Lord’s love for us, about the meaning of the work of redemption, and about what this description of the sufferings of the Redeemer of Men has to do with the creation of man and the consequences of sin. Oh, sin! Every one of them is the cause of the rupture in our communion with the Father; every sin is a wound in our souls that disfigures our beauty, that hardens our hearts, weakening the power of goodness. Every sin is an acceptance of a lie of the devil who always wants to steal the liberating power of Truth.

“Behold, my servant shall prosper,  
 he shall be exalted and lifted up,  
 and shall be very high.  
 As many were astonished at him  
*his appearance was so marred, beyond human  
 semblance,*  
*and his form beyond that of the sons of men—*  
*He had no form or comeliness that we should  
 look at him,*  
 and *no beauty that we should desire him.*  
 He was *despised and rejected by men;*  
*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;*  
 and *as one from whom men hide their faces*  
*he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*  
 Surely he has borne our griefs  
*and carried our sorrows;*  
 yet we esteemed him *stricken,*  
*smitten by God, and afflicted.*  
 But *he was wounded for our transgressions,*  
 he was *bruised for our iniquities;*  
 upon him was the chastisement that made us

whole,  
 and with *his stripes we are healed.*  
 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
 yet *he opened not his mouth;*  
 like *a lamb that is led to the slaughter,*  
 and like a sheep that before its shearers is  
 dumb,  
 so *he opened not his mouth.*  
*By oppression and judgment he was taken away;*  
 And they made his grave with the wicked  
 and with a rich man in his death,  
 although he had done *no violence,*  
*and there was no deceit in his mouth.*  
 Yet it was the will of the Lord *to bruise him;*  
 he has put him to grief;  
 when *he makes himself an offering for sin,*  
 he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his  
 days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his  
 hand; because he poured out his soul to death,  
 and was numbered with the transgressors;  
 yet he bore the sin of many,  
 and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Sin entered the garden of Eden, into the hearts of Adam and Eve and through them, into all of our hearts. Christ came into the world to heal the wounds of sin in our souls, to give us a new heart, to make us not only rediscover our original innocence- that is, our original beauty, goodness and truth- but to allow our hearts, minds, bodies, sentiments, senses, will, intellect... all our human potentialities to be healed and restored to it.

**Beauty?** Yes, are our hearts truly beautiful? Do we possess the virtues that beautify our hearts and order our sentiments, affections, choices and inclinations, to always seek what is good and true? Beauty, as I said at the beginning of this letter, is not only something to admire, but is essential to our existence, to our nature, to our creation. Beauty has a profound relationship with who we are, with our deepest desires and our true dignity and greatness. Beauty is a state of the soul that shapes and orders the human heart. Inner beauty must be reflected in the beauty of our external senses in a way that they not only reflect the true beauty of God in our souls, but are capable of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and speaking what is beautiful and in that way to communicate in all things the beauty of God... the authentic beauty of the human person. By expressing the inner beauty of the soul through every sense, a culture of love, beauty, truth, and goodness is created.

Sin has disfigured our internal and external beauty. It has deformed our desire for beauty and has led us to reject the sacrifices that are required to regain our original beauty... Jesus allowed “his human appearance [to be] so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men—

He had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. as one from whom men hide their faces”, to reveal to us how sin has disfigured the beauty of virtue in our hearts. The beauty that was so freely given to us at our creation was marred, disordered, and disfigured by rejecting and ignoring the greatness of holiness, virtue, and the image of God in our souls.

How can we allow that the Holy Face of Our Lord, which was so disfigured, deformed, and spat upon, beaten with a reed and slapped with force, bleeding and sweating from the harshness of His sacrificial offering, restore the beauty of our hearts? How do we allow the wounded Face of Jesus to restore the beauty of the Face of the pure and unblemished Lamb in our hearts and in our senses? How can we cooperate in the re-creation of our original beauty when we have, in various ways, cooperated in the deformation of the image of God in us, or not fully understood how to cultivate and protect that divine beauty in our humanity?

How can we, this Lent, allow the wounded, bleeding Face of Jesus to transform our senses to be living channels of the beauty of God in us and through us to others? I propose that we at least choose to dedicate time daily to pray deeply with the Sacred Scriptures, first prayerfully reading Isaiah 52 and 53, the Song of the Suffering Servant, and then all the Gospel accounts of the Passion of our Lord so that we discover how, in the midst of so much physical and internal suffering, the power of true beauty-love- was always triumphing. I recommend that you begin to apply the virtues you discover in these passages of Sacred Scripture to the 5 senses through which, as windows to our souls, beauty can be either disfigured or recreated.

Let us bring the 5 senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch to the 5 wounds of the Lord because by his wounds we have been healed and restored-

**The eyes:** are a powerful gift through which we can see all around us. We can see life, others, objects; we can walk with knowledge of where we are going. We can approach things and put them in order, give



them the right color, form and beauty. Sight is one of the first areas that Jesus, as the Redeemer, came to return to man as we read in the proclamation of the characteristics of His messianic mission. These characteristics are particularly lived and celebrated during a Jubilee Year like the one we are living this year: “I have come to give sight to the blind”. (Luk 4). And during His public ministry we saw him doing this for many who sought this healing.

Why would eyes and the capacity for sight be the first sense that Jesus wanted to heal? Because our sight has been disordered by sin. We see through lenses colored by selfishness, self-interest, self-love, self-referentiality, and bad sentiments towards others. We are inclined to see reality and others from our own sinful tendencies, and not necessarily from objective truth. In Matthew 7, Jesus spoke firmly to us: *“Why do you look at the sliver in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the beam in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a beam in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye”*.

This passage reveals the consequence of sin in the sense of sight. There are many other passages in which we can contemplate the gaze of Jesus in contrast to the gaze of men. He allowed himself to be totally disfigured and rejected to the point that no one wanted to see Him because He did not look like a human person.... He was delivering us from vanity and we did not want to see Him? Vanity is a grave sin, a capital sin, through which our image is more important than the truth. How much penance we need to make for the purification of our sense of sight!

How many sins are committed with the eyes? This Lent I invite you to seek those sins and apply a practical penance that will cut off any darkness that can touch your eyes. It could be curiosity, a judgmental way of looking, criticizing with your eyes, being attentive to others to compete with them rather than to serve them or to serve their needs, or to use the gift of sight to gain knowledge or control. It could be too much time gossiping or watching banalities or superficialities on social media. It could be the use of the eyes to commit sins of impurity that affect our identity, dignity, value and the gift of imagination.

What concrete penances are we going to apply to purify the gift of sight, the sense of our eyes? How will we have self-control and use our eyes to see with love, purity and moderation? Each of us knows how our eyes need to be cleansed, purified, ordered, and restored to their right purpose. I suggest that you seek

in prayer, honestly, how your eyes are used for love or for what opposes love, to care or to criticize, to see beauty or to get information to harm.

Jesus' eyes were filled with blood because the thorns on His head and forehead pierced the blood vessels. With blood in His eyes, what could He see? Probably not much... He did penance for our sight... His blood was cleansing the sins of our eyes. Let His blood and our penance, directed to order and form our sight, return the beauty of this gift. Jesus saw His Mother... the face of beauty! Let us choose to discipline our eyes to see the beauty of Jesus' Face and Our Lady and so transform our gaze into one of purity and beauty.

**The gift of hearing:** Jesus healed people who were deaf. He wanted them to be able to hear so they could be able to communicate and have a relationship with their world. But for Him, hearing was more than that: it was the capacity, before anything else, to hear the voice of God, to hear the will of God, to hear



His teachings and to obey. Hearing and obedience are totally united in the life and teaching of Christ. He heard so many different things during His earthly life... the songs of the angels, of his Mother and St. Joseph, the praises of the good shepherds, the honor given Him by kings, the announcement that ill-willed people wanted to kill him. He heard news of all kinds: He heard the simple hearts who wanted to listen to learn from Him and He also heard the manipulative questions or commentaries of those who wanted to trap Him and harm Him. Throughout the Passion He heard mocking, blasphemies and calumnies, screaming, denials, betrayal, unjust condemnations, rejections and lies...

His hearing was always protected by a free choice to not allow the beauty of that powerful sense to be tainted by the external words He heard. He was mocked, judged, and condemned, but He was listening beyond the words of darkness and sin... He was listening, always attentive to the voice of the Father, to the voice of His own Heart, to the silent voice of His Mother... to the pure voice of those who believed in Him and cried for Him...

What do we use the gift of listening for? This is an important question for us in order to seek what kind of penance we need to apply to the gift of listening to return beauty to my capacity to hear. Do I truly hear what the Lord is saying? Do I ponder what I hear? Do I immediately obey what I hear? Do I desire to hear Him and more of Him, or to hear anyone on social media? Do I allow my hearing to be a channel of beautification and formation of my heart or do I allow what I hear to empty my heart or to stain our interior purity? Do I hear information that does not belong to me? Do I ask questions to get information out of gossiping? Do I ask questions to learn more about the Lord and His Word? Do I ask questions or enter conversations to criticize, give a personal perception, or minimize the good that is being said? How many sins are committed through our hearing! Pray and discover how we need to do penance in our hearing to beautify this beautiful gift.

Is my hearing so attentive to the Lord's voice that He can say that "at your hearing this Word has been fulfilled", (Luk 4). Or, is our hearing as Our Lady's in whom the Word was made flesh in her? Do I truly give time to the Lord in prayer to listen to Him in His Word and allow that Word to change my heart and life? Hearing beautiful things, testimonies, teachings, things that will elevate our spirit, will beautify our sense of hearing. The ears of Our Lord were bruised and full of blood. The hatred, violence, malice and lies, calumnies or bad words spoken against Him were confronted with the blood of His ears... His blood, His penitential blood covered His ears for us, preventing the words of darkness from entering. Do we do the same? Do we apply penitential discipline to our hearing to prevent the words of darkness, malice and lies to enter our hearts and minds?

**Smell:** you must be wondering why this sense is so important to pray about and purify during this Lent when we are seeking the beautification of our hearts. It was hard to define until the Holy Spirit made me understand that smell in the spiritual realm means more than we think.

The loss of the ability to smell comes with a significant cost because olfaction serves several purposes that affect quality of life and even safety, including having a basic appetite for a healthy life, enhancing our sense of taste, alerting us to things that can be bad, old, poisoned, rotten, or warning us of danger, like if there is a fire in the house.



It was at the moment that I meditated on the purpose of the sense of smell that I realized that this sense must be applied to the capacity to “smell” or “discern” what is good and what is not good for us to increase our good appetites (all of them); or what we allow in ourselves that can lead us away from a healthy spiritual life; or how we can be around something or someone corrupted in his thinking or behavior and not smell the danger for our souls. The same can be applied to playing with fire (getting close to occasion for temptations) and not smelling the fire that is already burning causing me to be in serious danger.



I understood that our sense of smell has to do with the capacity to discern, to have discretion, prudence, and attentiveness to what is good or not so we do not put ourselves in spiritual or any type of danger. Do we “smell” the sincerity of people before we listen to them, or do we simply listen and believe anyone? Do we “smell” what can poison the truth of the gospel, or do I simply listen to anything that is being taught by anyone which endangers the health of our faith? Do we give permission to ourselves to stray from the narrow path of the Gospel and the duties of our vocations without smelling that we are endangering the integrity of our fidelity? Do we discern that everything we do is in accordance with the will of God? Do we believe that we can act in the darkness and not smell that we have entered into the field of the enemy? Do we permit ourselves to lie and to manipulate situations and not smell that impure actions and intentions are leading our heart far from the kingdom of light?

We must also make reparation and do penance for our lack of discernment, for acting out of sentiments, feelings, emotions, sensations, perceptions, and not taking the time to “smell” if what we are feeling is rotten or is healthy. Jesus had His nose totally dislocated by the blow of a heavy reed... which means He could not breath normally or enough to fill His lungs. The only thing He could smell was the blood that covered His face. The blood flowing in His dislocated nose was purifying our irresponsible smell and lack of discernment. We have to know that His nose was dislocated because our sense of responsible discernment has been ignored or forgotten, not recognizing that discerning the proper thing to do, the proper time to do it, and the proper way and intention, is fundamental for a moral life and correct reasoning and acting. I invite you to think of how we can do penance for the times we have not discerned what is good from what is bad; what is good from what is the greater good; and what is the greater good from what is perfect before the Lord. We also need to do penance for what we have done that has harmed others simply because we acted according to how we felt without thinking about the consequences it may cause for others.

**Taste and the mouth:** The mouth has the tongue which contains the sense of taste. Taste buds on the tongue allow us to detect chemicals, food, dangerous substances or good ones. The use of the tongue is one of the principal topics of the letter of St. James, who has an in depth understanding of the benefits of using our speech, our tongue as he calls it, to edify one another, for exhortation, teaching and fraternal correction. He also understands well the many harmful sins caused by speech to which he dedicates much of his letter. **For St. James, spiritual maturity is evidenced by the use of the tongue.** Its mastery is one of the clearest marks of a person of integrity, a true Christian. Tongue-mastery is the fruit of self-mastery. Maturity is manifested in the capacity to tame the tongue, to have a clear vision of what this gift should be used for and the capacity it possesses: to edify or to destroy; to heal or to wound; to bring clarity or confusion; to bring peace or hostility; to bring order or to create chaos; to calm hearts or to bring storms and deception; to be a witness to truth or an instrument of lies; to be a trustworthy person or untrustworthy is also related to the capacity to speak with transparency.

For St. James, *“if anyone thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, his religion is in vain.”* (Jm 1,26) He considers and makes it clear that the tongue is a little member in our body, with a capacity to accomplish great things or to do great harm. He compares it to a small fire set ablaze in a forest... it can become so destructive. We are called to repent and to purify the use of this power, the power to speak, with great prudence and moderation, always to speak in truth, transparency and in the light. One of the greatest signs that we are using the tongue outside God's order, is to speak in the dark, behind the back of those we are speaking about, to exaggerate our stories, or to minimize our mistakes; to gossip by speaking to those who do not have to know anything of what we are speaking. How much repentance is needed for the words we say! Our words reveal our hearts... What do we speak about? What is the first topic of our conversations? Are my conversations selective? Do I speak in the light and transparency? Do I go in the darkness so that I am not exposed?

We can mention some of the most common sins we commit that are related to speech: gossip, idle chatter, always bringing attention to ourselves, lies, exaggerations, harsh and offensive words, calumnies, and

uncharitable remarks. With our tongue we can spread hatred, incite fear and maliciousness, spread misinformation, cause temptation, discourage, teach error, and ruin reputations. With a gift capable of bringing such good, such beauty, such an edification of others, we can surely cause great harm!

This Lent, we are called to beautify the gift of speech by using this gift in coherence with the words of the Lord: *“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another” (Romans 14:19)*. We must also renounce and do penance for the sins we commit through our speech. Our mouths are to proclaim the goodness of the Lord... and to be used to build the kingdom of God and one another, not to tear down or damage reputations or manipulate information.



*We need to repent of:*

1. **The Lying Tongue** – speaking false things with the intention to mislead
2. **The Flattering Tongue** – exaggerating the good qualities of others in order to seek to have them close to ourselves. This is a form of utilitarianism.
3. **The Proud Tongue** – The proud tongue is boastful and overly certain of what it says. Those of proud tongue are not easily corrected, they want their point to prevail.
4. **The Overused Tongue** – saying far too much, speaking what is private, what does not belong for them to say, or for those who are hearing to know. This shows a lack of moderation.
5. **The Hasty Tongue**- Speaking before we should; always giving our opinions when not asked and before we even have all the information. Irresponsible with words, not taking in account that it is difficult to fully take back what is spoken. It is also a form of injustice since speaking hastily or rashly can harm others in many ways.
6. **The Backbiting Tongue** – talking about others behind their backs, the secretive injuring of a person’s good name. Calumny is outright lying about another person. Detraction is calling unnecessary attention to the faults of others so as to harm their reputations.
7. **The Tale-bearing Tongue** – spreading unnecessary (often hurtful) information about others. Tale-bearers spread personal information about others that should not be shared, sometimes with the excuse of asking for prayer.
8. **The Cursing Tongue** – wishing that harm come to others, and is sometimes more subtle than direct, even though it could be. Sometimes by not wishing well, not expressing our good desires for others, there is a hidden bad desire.
9. **The Piercing Tongue** – speaking with unnecessary harshness and severity. We see even in Jesus and the apostles sometimes the use of strong and firm correction, which some may also perceive as harsh, but they were necessary to bring them out of darkness and sin or to protect the work of the Lord.

I invite you to truly look into the realities of how we speak: what do we speak about? to whom do we speak? do we speak moderated by charity, justice, truth, light and temperance? or do we speak by emotions, without reasoning or taking into account the harm we can do by our perceptions communicated to others? We should make a list of how we think that our speech is honest, transparent, in the light of Christ, or if it has some agendas, hidden purposes, or interests.

Jesus, the Suffering Servant, the suffering Lamb, is described by Isaiah 53:7-9:

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
he opened not his mouth.  
*By oppression and judgment he was taken away;*  
although he had done *no violence,*  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

All His life, Jesus was formed to listen to the Father’s will and to listen to the voices of Our Lady, His Mother and St. Joseph, His virginal Father. His mission was one of silence, a deep silence that formed Him for His mission to preach the Gospel... to know when to speak, when to go away to the desert, when to respond or not to respond, when to keep total silence, when it was time to teach, and when to speak with words or speak with gestures and actions. **Silence is a powerful school to tame and moderate the use of the gift of speech.** Silence is a form of fasting that moderates the disordered appetite to speak, sometimes to speak too much and occupy the time and attention of others. But most importantly, silence teaches us the virtue of patience... since patience is the silence of actions, not only of words. To learn to

wait in silence is a powerful virtue called patience. Let us be like the pure lamb who generously accepted to be offered for the salvation of many. Let us embrace whatever the Lord permits, in the purity and the beauty of a silence that is moved by love.

**Touch.** The sense of touch has much to do with our bodily sensations, with our bodily pleasures or comforts, or with our bodily sufferings. How much we need to take time during this sacred season of Lent to reflect on our relationship with our bodies: Are our bodies ours or the Lord's? Am I free to do with my body whatever I desire? Have our bodies become the center of our own attention by seeking pleasure (like food, comfort, and others ways of provoking pleasure), or by being overly attentive to any discomfort, pain, and not forming ourselves to be strong and disciplined in our bodies? We live, unfortunately, in a culture of extreme comfort-seeking, where it is almost a goal in life to seek what we like, what brings us more comfort and pleasure, rejecting any type of discomfort or bodily sacrifice. Maybe this is the reason why in Her apparitions Our Lady asks so insistently that we begin to fast, to bring this powerful denial and discipline to our bodies. Fasting is a powerful tool to discipline our bodily appetites for food. Without fasting, we can easily fall into the sin of gluttony by eating only what we like, always seeking to please our desire for food, and satisfying our constant need to eat. Fasting is a powerful tool to have self-control over our excessive attention to bodily discomfort. Yes, fasting causes a little hunger, but it is a wise way to remember that our bodies need to be trained to face discomfort, to be strong in sufferings, or lackings, and to be free from excessive desire for comfort that can compromise our Christian way of life and even our fidelity to Christ and his Gospel.



How many sins can be committed seeking pleasure and comfort? The major sins of our times are committed because of a disordered way of seeking pleasure at all cost. This indiscriminate search for pleasure, called nihilism, seeks to avoid any type of suffering or discomfort and is building a “crystal generation”, incapable of dealing with any kind of difficulty, physical or emotional suffering, or facing any type of contradiction or demands of life.

We need to repent first of believing that our bodies are our property. Our bodies are a gift of God which we are responsible to care for, to educate to live in virtue and to avoid sin, to make sure that they become a language of love and respect to ourselves and to others. We have not only a personal but a social responsibility to care appropriately for our bodies, not to make others suffer the consequences of our irresponsible behavior because we did whatever we wanted to do. Many times I have found cases in which a person has become very ill because he or she did not follow the doctors' instructions in reference to denying themselves certain foods that were counterproductive. They did not follow the instructions because they wanted to eat them, but as a consequence they became very ill with their families suffering and paying the price for their lack of sacrifice.

We also need to repent from the constant desire to seek pleasure in food, or in any other bodily way. We need to repent from the lack of fortitude in dealing with physical or emotional suffering that life may bring. How many complaints come from our hearts when we are going through difficulties? How much we fail to offer our sufferings and how many graces are wasted because we were thinking more of what we desire than of what is important at that moment?

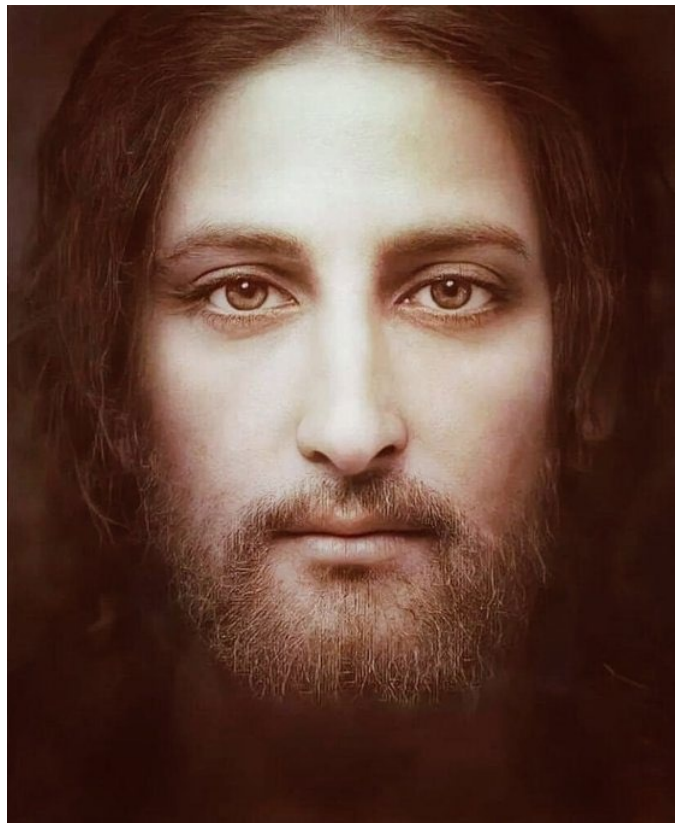
I invite you to fast during this Lent, at least on Fridays, but a fasting that will really begin to discipline our bodies and our appetites, that will fortify not only our bodies but also our wills. Regularly yielding and seeking what is pleasurable and comfortable weakens not only our bodies and also our wills. We need to be aware of the pleasures that we can hardly deny ourselves and which need to be brought to our attention, repentance and penance, as does the weakness that brings us to desire to rid ourselves of any small discomfort. In Lent, we are to grow in a spirit of fortitude that comes from the virtue of temperance, which is the moderation and denial of all that enslaves our appetites, our bodies, and wills.

Dear Family, this sacred time of Lent is a great grace in this particular year. We are in a Jubilee Year, 2025 years of the incarnation of the Lord... it is a time to allow the power of His redemptive love and mission to deliver us from all that has disfigured our hearts, our lives, our senses, and our minds. He came to give us a new heart and new life, to make all things new... to bring us back to the beauty of our creation. To be beautified requires self-knowledge, sacrifice, and penance. It requires that we allow ourselves to be touched by the power of His Precious Blood and that we look at the beauty of the Holy Face of the Redeemer to desire the grace of our beautification in virtue. I pray with all my heart that our senses may

be purified through grace, prayer, the power of the sacraments, and our responsible and serious desire to apply the power of sacrifice and penance to renounce any disfigurement and allow the beauty of His love to shine in us and through us.

This Lent is one of Hope! There is a torrent of grace for conversion, beautification, transformation and repentance that is flowing from two rivers: the Jubilee Year and the Sacred Time of Lent, both bring about abundant graces of redemption and conversion for our hearts. Let us journey this sacred time of Lent contemplating the beauty of the Redeemer of Man, as to be transformed into his luminous beauty and holiness. May we become beautified through the liberating power of the Cross of Our Lord, so His blood may not be shed in vain. May the Suffering Servant, the unblemished and pure Lamb of God... take away from us our sins. In this Lent, may He take away especially the sins of our senses to clean the windows that allow the light of Christ to enter our hearts. New senses, purified and beautified, will be a way to obtain a new heart because if the senses are pure, the heart will receive purity, and if the heart is pure like the Lamb, the senses will be instruments of pure love, this kind of love is the force that moves all of our being, actions, choices, words, thoughts, and gestures. *Just as Veronica gave Jesus her white mantle, may we give Jesus the purity of our senses for His wounded Face to be imprinted in our hearts and renew the original beauty for which we were created: the beauty of a virtues life that renews our hearts, and makes them capable of loving with the purity and sacrificial disposition of the lamb...*

*Mother Adela, SCTM*



**Behold the beauty of the Redeemer of Men!**

Lent 2025- Jubilee Year of Hope