



#### FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM:

It's our fourth week of journeying into the desert with Jesus to look at our lives and our spiritual health. We have heard the call to be a disciple; we have been taught the importance of confidence and trust; and we understand that through perseverance we die to ourselves in order to receive new life through resurrection.

In our journey we may think to ourselves, "How can I be a disciple? How can I experience Jesus as the first disciples did? I don't have any special attributes, and I am certainly not a saint; so why does Jesus ask this of me? Well... take some time to go to a quiet place, you desert. Relax, and take a few deep breaths. Empty yourself of "yourself" and make room for "Him."

Listen carefully now for Jesus is speaking to you: "It's good to have this time with you (your name) and I know that you have many questions as you face the challenges of this Lenten journey.

I know that you think it is necessary to be "better" than you are, if you are to be my disciple. Dear (your name), listen carefully to today's Gospel. My disciples were ordinary people called to do extra ordinary things. They were not men or women with great strengths, or even an unwavering faith. My followers were simple people. My followers are those who struggle with their everyday lives and still find hope and joy. They are those who have faith, and yet still doubt. They are faithful, and yet at times they still turn away from me. It's okay! I know you do your best, and I am well aware of your human weakness. I too, in my humanity showed weakness. I showed anger to the moneychangers in the temple; I expressed my disappointment more than once in my disciples, who often acted more like spoiled children than followers of me. I constantly challenged the religious authorities of the day, and sometimes not in a nice way, but I was so upset at how they had prevented the people from knowing that my Father was a loving Father and my humanity got the best of me. I was frightened to the point of tears at my impending suffering and death, and even asked my Father to take it away from me. On the Cross I felt alone and abandoned by God crying out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me", and my so called disciples had all disappeared except for the women who were faithful and stood by me to the end and John. You see

(your name), it is precisely because we you are weak that God reveals to you his strength, and this strength is what helps us to put perspective into your life.

It is so important for you to keep saying over and over again 'God loves me, and there is nothing that I can ever do or say that would make Him stop loving me.' It is the power of my love that should give you your courage to persevere and to answer my call. My love and my grace is enough for you. Continue this week to repeat this to yourself again and again until it becomes a natural part of your everyday thought. Make this your daily mantra. Let this be the reason that you share my ministry on earth, so that you might experience my life now, and in its' fullness after human life departs. I've told you this before, but it bears repeating 'prayer is the key that will open every day to the joy of life with me, and it is the key that will lock every night and allow you a peaceful sleep.' Let's go now, and continue together do discover new things about each other."

**Let us pray:**

**Loving Jesus, I come to you now sinful and sorrowful, and in need of your love. Merciful Jesus, my heart is waiting, seeking your forgiveness, your healing, and your love. Let me not waiver on this Lenten journey with you, but let me persevere so that Easter will give a new meaning of Resurrection to my life. Amen.**