

- Our first reading and Gospel today recall for us the mighty power of God: that He is the creator and ruler of all things visible and invisible. It is God alone whom wind and sea obey.
- And it is good for us to contemplate God's omnipotence, for doing so helps us cultivate the virtue of humility; it helps keep us in our place. That's really one of the primary points of the Book of Job that we read from today.
- Job is renowned for his righteousness, and yet he is struck with a series of sufferings that would crush any normal man. His friends believe that Job has been smote by God as some sort of punishment, because in their minds, that's the only explanation for such calamity.
- Yet, Job refuses to curse God, and he maintains his innocence in the face of their accusations that he must have some secret sin for which God is punishing him. In the end of the book, there's a dialogue between the Lord and Job, from which today's first reading is taken.
- While in this dialogue between God and Job it may seem like God is rebuking Job, if you read it closely you come to understand that our Lord is really just asserting His omniscience and omnipotence.
- God is making the point to Job that, there are reasons and factors well beyond Job's understanding that provide rationale for why the innocent must sometimes suffer. And man must choose whether or not to have faith in God's almighty power – which Job humbly does.

- In today's Gospel, as Jesus calms the turbulent sea, He reveals Himself as God Almighty. He shows that power over nature that God alone possesses. In so doing, Jesus both reveals His identity, and He gives His disciples reasons to humble themselves and draw near to Him.
- They witness God's omnipotence firsthand, and we can only imagine how this experience not only helped increase their faith in our Lord, but how it humbled them – for as we know from Luke Ch. 9, there were arguments amongst the disciples about who was the greatest.
- In our sinfulness, in our pride, man often looks for ways to exalt himself and to place himself above others in an attempt to wield power, control, or influence.
- This desire for power and control is something most of us must fight, at least on some level.
- While we see this wrestling for power, control, and influence writ large upon the pages of politics in the maneuvering of world leaders, it exists on a smaller, but no less dangerous scale, within the hearts of many of us.
- It's a form of pride that says: "I should be in control; I should make the decision; others should do what I say." Of course, the great progenitor of such pride is the devil himself.
- Faced with an eternity of loving and serving God and sharing in the Lord's glory, or serving himself out of a devilish pride, the evil one chose to rebel against God in a complete and irrevocable way – taking, it is believed, a third of the angels with him.
- Tradition tells us that his famous words of rebellion were: "*Non serviam*" – "I will not serve." And with those words he set out to oppose God in every way, choosing not to do the will of God, but asserting his own will with a damnable pride.
- In our own time and place, so many political leaders, corporate heads, media moguls, and even Church leaders selfishly and proudly refuse to submit to God's ways, much like the *non serviam* uttered by satan so long ago.
- Heedless of God's omnipotence, they set themselves against God; and without repentance, they risk following the evil one and his minions into a hellish eternity.

- A pride by which man consciously, willfully, and directly opposes what he knows to be God's will is one of the most grievous of sins because it's a direct affront to God, and doing so habitually leads one to hating God and scorning His mercy, effectively barring the gates of Heaven.
- As I mentioned earlier, to combat our proud desires, it is good for us to contemplate God's omnipotence. When we meditate on God's acts of power, especially as we read through the Scriptures, it helps to shape and form within us a disposition of humility toward God.
- Yet, so often we sinful men need the example of others to *really* show us how to humble ourselves properly before God. And no one has done this better than Our Lady.
- When Jesus found the disciples arguing amongst themselves about who was the greatest in Luke 9, He said to them: "...the one who is least among all of you is the one who is the greatest."
- In other words, our greatness – if we can possess any – is found in our humility. In God's eyes man's greatness is measured by the degree to which we recognize God's omnipotence and correspond to it through our humble practice of the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.
- For if we truly recognize God's almighty power, we will want to humble ourselves before Him, trust Him more, hope in Him more, and love Him more. And no one did that better than the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- A couple of weeks ago I spoke about how Our Lady crushes Satan with her heel, as depicted in the image of her as the Immaculate Conception we have in our chapel.
- In truth, Mary was Christ's greatest disciple because she was the most obedient to God's will! In her great humility, she recognized God's absolute omnipotence, which led her to loving Him, trusting Him, and obeying His will with absolute perfection.
- In her perfect fulfillment of God's will, Mary, the New Eve, counteracts the Eve whose direct disobedience to God's will brought upon us all the terrible scourge of sin.
- Yet it's also the perfect fulfillment of God's will by the Virgin Mary that makes her the absolute nemesis of the devil, whose proud refusal to serve our Lord got him kicked out of heaven and will ultimately lead to his eternal demise at the end of time.
- As I mentioned two weeks ago, Mary's humility in wanting only God's will is the supreme reproach to the devil's proud disobedience. This is why the devil hates her and fears her so much. This is precisely why Our Lady wields such great power over the devil.
- Brothers and sisters, while many of us have responsibilities that give us power, authority, and influence over others, we must learn to wield what earthly power we have with humility: recognizing that it is God alone Who exercises absolute power.
- We must see in our authority and influence – whether as a parent, a coach, a teacher, a boss, an organizational or civic leader – the responsibility of leading in a godly way, in a manner consonant with God's will and commandments.
- What's more, we must see in God's omnipotence not only His power over all creation, but His power over sin and death: His power to save us from hell.
- With Our Lady as our model and inspiration, may we humble ourselves before our Lord, and seek to do His will with perfection.
- And let us have absolute trust that, whatever God allows to befall us in this life – even sufferings like that of Job – will be used by God for our benefit if humbly trust Him.
- Our Lady, Virgin Most Humble, pray for us.