

25 Secrets of spiritual struggle that Jesus revealed to St. Faustina



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How to protect yourself from demon attacks

In Cracow-Pradnik, June 2, 1938, the Lord Jesus directed a young Polish Sister of Mercy on a three-day retreat. Faustina Kowalska painstakingly recorded Christ's instruction in her diary that is a mystical manual on prayer and Divine Mercy. Having read the Diary a few times in the past 20 years, I had forgotten about the unique retreat that Christ gave on the subject of spiritual warfare. Then, recently, I was invited to lead a retreat in Trinidad based on Christ's "Conference on Spiritual Warfare" as presented in the Diary. The Sanctuary of the Holy Family, an amazing group of lay leaders in service to the Archbishop and priests, sponsored the retreat in the Archdiocese of Trinidad and we filled the Seminary of St. John Vianney to ponder this teaching.

Here are the secret whispers of Jesus to his little bride Faustina on how to protect herself from the attacks of the devil. These instructions became Faustina's weapon in fighting the good fight.

Jesus began, "My daughter, I want to teach you about spiritual warfare" (1760). (The Lord's words are in bold text; my comments follow.)

1. **Never trust in yourself but abandon yourself totally to My will.**

Trust is a spiritual weapon. Trust is part of the shield of faith that St. Paul mentions in chapter six of Ephesians: the armor of God. Abandonment to God's will is an act of trust; faith in action dispels evil spirits.

2. **In desolation, darkness and various doubts, have recourse to Me and to your spiritual director. He will always answer you in my name.**

In times of spiritual warfare, immediately pray to Jesus. Invoke His Holy Name that is feared in the netherworld. Bring darkness into the light by telling a spiritual director or confessor and follow his instruction.

3. **Do not bargain with any temptation; lock yourself immediately in My Heart.**

In the Garden of Eden, Eve bargained with the devil and lost. We have recourse to the refuge of the Sacred Heart. In running to Christ, we turn our backs on the demonic.

4. **At the first opportunity, reveal the temptation to the confessor.**

A good confession, a good confessor, and a good penitent are a recipe for victory over temptation and demonic oppression—without fail.

5. **Put your self-love in the last place, so that it does not taint your deeds.**

Self-love is natural but it should be ordered, free of pride. Humility defeats the devil that is perfect pride. Satan tempts us to disordered self-love to lead us into his pool of pride.

6. **Bear with yourself with great patience.**

Patience is a secret weapon that helps us to keep our peace of soul even in the great storms of life. Bearing with oneself is part of humility and trust. The devil tempts us to impatience, to turn against our selves so we become angry. See yourself from God's view. He is infinitely patient.

7. **Do not neglect interior mortifications.**

Scripture teaches that some demons can only be evicted by prayer and fasting. Interior mortifications are weapons of warfare. They can be small sacrifices offered with great love. The power of sacrificial love evicts the enemy.

8. Always justify to yourself the opinions of your superiors and of your confessor.

Christ is speaking to St. Faustina who lives in a convent. But we all have people in authority over us. The devil aims to divide and conquer so humble obedience to *authentic* authority is a spiritual weapon.

9. Shun murmurs like a plague.

The tongue is a powerful vessel that can do great harm. Murmuring, gossiping, is never of God. The devil is a liar who stirs up false accusations and gossip that can kill a person's reputation. Shun murmurs!

10. Let all act as they like; you are to act, as I want you to.

To mind one's own business is key in spiritual warfare. The devil is a busybody attempting to drag everyone down. Please God and let the opinions of others go by the wayside.

11. Observe the rule as faithfully as you can.

Jesus is referring to the rule of a Religious Order here. Most of us have made some vow before God and Church and we should be faithful our promises—i.e. Marriage vows and baptismal vows. Satan tempts to infidelity, lawlessness and disobedience. Fidelity is a weapon for victory.

12. If someone causes you trouble, think what good you can do for the person who caused you to suffer.

Being a vessel of divine mercy is a weapon for good and for defeating evil. The devil is about hatred, rage, revenge, and unforgiveness. Others have hurt us all at some time. What good can we do in return? Returning a blessing breaks curses.

13. Do not pour out your feelings.

A talkative soul will more easily be attacked by the devil. Pour out your feelings to the Lord only. Remember, the good and evil spirits hear what you say aloud. Feelings are fleeting. Truth is the compass. Interior recollection is a spiritual armor.

14. Be silent when you are rebuked.

Most of us have been rebuked at some time. We have no control over that but we can control our response. The need to be right all the time can lead into demonic traps. God knows the truth. Let it go. Silence is a protection. The devil can use self-righteousness to trip us up also.

15. Do not ask everyone's opinion, but only the opinion of your confessor; be as frank and simple as a child with him.

Simplicity of life can drive out demons. Honesty is a weapon to defeat Satan, the Liar. When we lie we put a foot in his camp and he will try to seduce us all the more.

16. Do not become discouraged by ingratitude.

No one likes to be taken for granted. But when we are met with ingratitude or insensitivity, the spirit of discouragement can weigh us down. Resist all discouragement for it is never of God. It is one of the devil's most effective temptations. Gratitude in all things wins the day.

17. Do not examine with curiosity the roads down which I lead you.

The need to know, and curiosity about the future is a temptation that has led too many people into the backrooms of psychics, witches, etc. Choose to walk in faith. Decide to trust in God who leads you on the path to heaven. Resist the spirit of curiosity always.

18. When boredom and discouragement beat against your heart, run away from yourself and hide in My heart.

Jesus delivers the same message a second time. Now He refers to boredom. Earlier in the Diary he told St. Faustina that the devil most easily tempts *idle souls*. Beware of boredom, a spirit of lethargy,

or acedia—the noonday devil. Idle souls are easy prey for demons. Be about the business of God.

19. Do not fear struggle; courage itself often intimidates temptations, and they dare not attack us.

Fear is the second most common tactic of the devil (pride is the first). Courage intimidates the devil—he will flee in the face of persevering courage that stands on Jesus, the rock. All people struggle, God is our provision.

20. Always fight with the deep conviction that I am with you.

Jesus instructs a Sister in a convent to “fight” with conviction. She can do so because Christ accompanies her. Christians are called to fight with conviction against all demonic tactics. The devil tries to terrorize souls, demonic terrorism—resist! Invoke the Holy Spirit throughout the day.

21. Do not be guided by feeling, because it is not always under your control; but all merit lies in the will.

All merit lies in the will because love is an act of the will. We are completely free in Christ. We must make a choice, a decision for good or evil. What camp do we live in?

22. Always depend upon your superiors, even in the smallest things.

Christ is instructing a Religious here. But, we all have the Lord as our Superior. Dependence upon God is a weapon of spiritual warfare because we cannot win on our own. Proclaiming Christ’s victory over evil is part of intentional discipleship. Christ came to defeat death & evil. Proclaim Him!

23. I will not delude you with prospects of peace and consolations; on the contrary, prepare for great battles.

St. Faustina suffered physically and spiritually. She was prepared for great battles by the grace of God who upheld her. Christ clearly instructs us in scripture to be prepared for great battles, to put on God’s armor and resist the devil. Be vigilant and discerning always.

24. Know that you are on a great stage where all heaven and earth are watching you.

We are all on a great stage where heaven and earth are watching. What message is our life giving? What radiates from us—shades of light, darkness or grey? The way we live attracts more light or more darkness. If the devil does not succeed in pulling us into darkness, he tries to keep us in the category of the lukewarm, which is not pleasing to God.

25. Fight like a knight, so I can reward you. Do not be unduly fearful, because you are not alone.

The Lord’s words to St. Faustina can become our mantra: Fight like a knight! A knight for Christ knows well the cause that he fights for, the nobility of his mission, the King who he serves, and with blessed assuredness of the victory, he fights to the end, even at the cost of his life. If a young, uneducated, simple Polish nun, united to Christ, can fight like a knight, every Christian can do the same. Trust is victorious.

Quotes from the [Diary of St. Faustina](#) are copyrighted by the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, Stockbridge, Mass. For more information on “fighting like a knight” please visit www.foundationforpriests.org spiritual warfare section. This piece originally appeared in [The Catholic Exchange](#), and is reprinted here with kind permission of the author.