Matthew 14: 1-12
Herod the tetrarch heard of the reputation of Jesus and said to his servants, “This man is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him.”

Now Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, for John had said to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” Although he wanted to kill him, he feared the people, for they regarded him as a prophet. But at a birthday celebration for Herod, the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests and delighted Herod so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for. Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.”

The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests who were present, he ordered that it be given, and he had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. His disciples came and took away the corpse.

Our Scripture Reflection
John the Baptist was a Prophet and like all of the Prophets before him he spoke out against the immorality of the King and it cost him dearly for doing so. Herod’s ego was so over-inflated that it shoved his heart into a corner, so much so, that it could not expand enough to become
humble and grateful for John’s message. John spoke, as did all the Prophets, in order to get Herod to repent. If only Herod (and we) would listen. Prophets speak in order to save us. We, then, are left with the choice to either accept or reject their life-saving message.

Food for your Journey
One evening an old Cherokee chief told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, “My son, the battle is between two wolves. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.” “The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.” The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked, “Grandfather, which wolf wins?” The old Cherokee chief simply replied, “The one you feed.”

A Prayer from the Heart
Dear God, Please give me the Grace of humility so that I may always be open to Your word which calls me to conversion and new life. If I feel upset when I listen to Your Word may I realize that my discomfort is the result of my reluctance to accept Your way. Help me to change what needs to be changed, Lord, despite the cost. Amen