



Sunday of the Holy Cross

The Gospel According to Mark 8:34-38; 9:1



The cross is the two edged sword that cuts deep, from top to bottom, through the cover of sin in which humankind shamelessly clothed itself after the fall, when we became ashamed of doing good instead of being “ashamed having no good thoughts for God to rest on them” (St Macarius). We see that even in the intention of the innocent children who are ashamed of doing something good because they are noticed. They don’t want to be noticed, as a protection against the attention of the world which they somehow instinctively reject. Because there is something wrong with this worldly attention. They expose their innocent goodness and they become vulnerable. They sense that without knowing it as a fact. There is also the possibility that one might choose to do something good without being noticed, which is, in essence, the

good itself, in the purity of their heart, being faithful to the goodness they know and desire with innocence, the innocence of the child.

The cross, a child would say, is not about suffering but about the love that prevails. A child with a piercing voice looking for a reason to do good. So, in their eyes, the cross is the love that disarms everything and anything that bears the mark of sin in itself. It shows the limit of sin and the prevailing of Truth. The cross tells us that any small or great sign of goodness that the soul searches in this life is not and shall never be consumed by forgetfulness. Because it comes from

God, in which the human heart chooses freely to partake. The children love to do the sign of the cross because it takes away from their heart the shame of the world in the face of doing good. It leads them into that.

So, in the mind of the child, to follow the cross is to follow the goodness. Everything you know about being good in your life. To be faithful to the innocence that sets strong roots and grows within the heart.

The cross tells us that God is faithful to the good desire of men and protects them from wandering off this road. That is why He tells us that nothing bad would happen to us. He speaks about the confession of faith that purifies itself by the unconsumed desire to do good. The integrity stays within the desire to pursue this goddess against the fabric of sin that covers the world and to pursue it even against your own weakness and failures. The cross is the proof that every form of goodness abused and silenced in this life prevails, being picked up by Christ Himself from the sinful ocean of mud that chokes human life. Christ picks it up with His own hands, like a pearl found in the mud, rendering it back to us at the last judgement.

When we think of all the innocence harmed in this world today, all the wounds from the body of the church, all the deceitful discreditation of the good movement of the soul, we should remember that no good is done in vain. It is purified through fire, through God's love that burns the imperfection of our own broken and small good things, in order to render them back to us at the last judgement.

We rest by the cross today because we see that all the contagious forms of sin have a remedy. We rest by the cross, not only because by partaking of this goodness we partake of the eternity of God, but also because the harm done to innocence is today humiliated through forgiveness. The edge of sin over innocence is that, when the first touches the latter, the innocence harms itself. By being lived and rejected in this life, the innocence of good becomes an unbearable burden for those who do not want to compromise. It is like a form of self-harm. Because goodness is hunted by the sinful attention of the world it could harm itself by becoming locked within one's purity of soul. It is bruised and bleeding, vulnerable to being silenced and locked away.

Today, the cross reverses the process. It generates innocence in the heart of the sinful fabric of the world. The cross is shining through every innocent human soul harmed in this life. It gathers all of them so they become, through the cross of Christ, the pillars of the church, the new fabric of the community, the covenant that brings about the newest of life for all because it bears the mark of forgiveness.

The life giving cross is sorrowful today because it is so real and this is another reason for which we can rest beside it in Lent. The world needs more pillars in order for the kingdom of God to receive a strong foundation to hold everybody in. But it is through the cross of Christ that we receive the innocence of doing good without being ashamed of it. His cross is a two edged sword that cuts from top to bottom the fabric of sin in which we shamelessly covered ourselves after the fall. All signs of innocence that man recovered by following Him are like pocket knives that pinch through the same fabric, in order for the life of the resurrection to be received without the measure of how much darkness there is yet in the world. Of course, pocket knives are not all equally sharp.

If we have a blunt one, we should not be ashamed to use it because if we cannot cut through, at least we can soften the fabric for another one coming later to perform the final cut.

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (from Saturday gospel)

"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me..

For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

"Your Life shall hang before your eyes and you shall fear day and night, and you will not believe in your Life. ...because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight your

eyes see". (Deuteronomy 28:50)



Through His nakedness on the cross, Christ clothed all of us with innocence so we may never again be afraid to behold life and desire it with all our being.

The gospel tells us that Jesus calls the people to Himself, together with all the disciples, and He invites them to follow Him. So the invitation is extended to both those who formally listen to Him and to those who do it within their heart, without the formal recognition, to all those who have the desire.

It was the first time Jesus spoke openly about His passion. God does not do anything alone without inviting: "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26) without sharing His life with the people, without sharing every good thing. Jesus invites us to a way of life that is rejected by those who harm life. Jesus walks on the path of the cross without the fear of men because He has no sin. The cross was designed not only to destroy but also to shame everybody. It strips you of the garments that men made after the fall to cover the shameful of sin. It shows, in the marketplace, that you have no right to pursue goodness because you are covered in sin, because your nakedness of your soul is shameful. It shows to the world and humiliates any desire to partake of life. Any form of innocence as long as it does not come out of what is written in the books. (Don't we see this unfortunately so often today as well? When it is taken for real and lived, goodness is ridiculed. When it is quoted from books everybody agrees with it, as long as it does not go beyond the letter of the book).

With Christ, the humiliation that He endured fell upon those who inflicted it on Him because He had no sin. There is no inherited shame to endanger the love of the Father to which He was obedient. For men, the invitation touches a sensitive spot within the being because it creates fear when man beholds the life that he feels he is not worthy of, the life that he harmed with his own sins. If you end up in the marketplace, your nakedness is real and your sin becomes visible, so how could you follow Him on a road that asks for the purity of heart. Sooner or later, they will prove that innocence and purity are not perfect and send to the abyss any goodness found in a human heart. They will find a way to discredit it, sometimes by magnifying the weaknesses, other times by lying and mingling everything together or silencing it in complicity with the system.

As Christ does not want to go on the path of the cross by Himself but He invites and calls the followers to join Him, so also man is not walking alone on this path but always with Christ ahead of him. The cross of Christ perfects any human desire to receive and do good, as broken as this desire might be. Through the cross man can behold life with no fear and no shame because of the forgiveness that the cross brings about for all. For those who were harming life and for those who desired life with imperfection. Forgiveness is covering all humankind and takes its own time to bring about the newest of life, a different ocean, clean and deeper than the mud of sin that has been flooding humankind after the fall.

We might not feel worthy of His forgiveness that is coming today from the cross. It is not for us to figure it out or to dissect it but to behold it today on the cross. As a new reality of a sinful world and for our broken heart. To take time and to stay with Him and to weep.

"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Following Christ and His goodness can bring about unexpected things in our life. We should not expect anything though, but to follow the goodness that is shown to us. To behold life without fear, with our weaknesses and imperfections, and not to be ashamed of being discredited if the

community may do any small good thing. The community does not deny itself but it is rather called to be with those whose life was denied, with those whose life was already taken, with those who were left with nothing so they could not lose their soul. Christ walks with them side by side. Just as at the time of His passion some still deny Him and others witness His love in disturbing suffering. The community is called to be with them and follow them with no fear and no shame. To welcome the life that was left in them with no fear because it is blessed by God Himself.

On Thursday, Father told us about the shame that people experienced when staying in line to receive food at drop ins. We could relate to that because we had witnessed it the day before in Toronto as well. People were lining up on the sidewalk in order to receive food. Their shame in waiting for something good became ours for making them wait alone.

If we make it to the gate of Heaven, by not being ashamed to choose good in this life, Christ would not make us wait in line, even though the gate is narrow. He would receive us all at once, except maybe for those who kept his people waiting in line in this world, for good food to come their way. If only to let them experience that shame as a curing medicine and see what it means to wait by the door knowing the good inside. I can see how many social services in Toronto would need to line up by the gate, if the good they did was real, because they do keep people in line and they make that into a policy. We might be joining them as well, even if only for one day because we do try not to let that happen. However, in the eyes of God one day is like one thousand years and one thousand years is like one day. So we should try to be steadfast in our waiting because the good is for many to receive.

Keep in your prayers the catechumens:

Eliana, Wayne, Atty and Madison.

Hearer: Veneranda and her daughter and Zachary and Valerie

Please pray for:

Anne Tyron's husband who is sick

Anna Avairo's daughter going regularly to emergency room.

Vol Gomaz heart condition and immigration matters

Tharsini's daughter Luekamia

Levlin's two children who are sick

Sri's mother passed away,he is depress

Cassandra's grandmother - Helen

BettyAnn and Paul.

Wafaa and Sana sister (cancer)

Raj (got knifed)

Rejoice

Hilda (friend fighting covid) Romana, Colin, Michael, Peter, Henry, Joanna, George, Kelly;Tom; Candice, Camelia,

Please pray for health and salvation:

Mom waiting for baby Tejasree

Prashastha

Maria n dingo

Crisent

Helen

Greta

Elizabeth

Dean

John

Liz

Crisent

Ann Brown

Elizabeth

Sifie

Allen

Leon

Ricky and his family from back home for the hope of reuniting

Aaron, Anastas, Olivia, Gelly, Frank, Eva, George, Rebecca, Andreas, Cathyann, Reigan, Stephanie, James, Peter, Christine.

Christian family from Bangladesh, Sandra. Peter, Angel, Bless, Grace, Swetha family

Atlaw single mom at shelter, Vernevil family

the family of

Kenide

Sathiya

Sena

Vinothiny

Yvienne

Abdul

Sakanthalathevy

Jumke

Naimi

Anish

JOSHUA DANIEL -REALLY HEARTFELT REQUEST FOR PRAYER AS HE IS STRUGGLING TO KEEP ON A GOOD PATH

Maria Lolita Soliman Torres, Jonathan , Richard, Richard, Mary , Elizabeth, Michael, Bill, Robert, Alan, Joanne

Please pray for deceased

Pauanasuy Kamthasang

deceased (Covid)Maria

St. Silouan Chapel, April 4th, 2021

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