

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

3 September 2017

“Were not the ten made clean? But where are the nine. Has no one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner.” Lk. 19:17

Today’s Liturgy reminds us of the wonderful plans that God has given to man with the coming of His Son Jesus Christ. In the *Epistle* (Gal. 3:16-22) St. Paul gently reminds the Galatians, who wanted Christians to observe the rituals of the Jews. He guided them away from the old practices by recalling to their minds God’s solemn promise to Abraham and his seed: the Messiah Jesus Christ.

This Promise to Abraham came before the Law (by 430 years) and was more important than the Law (the Ten Commandments) which was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai for the transgressions of the Jews (Cf. II Cor.3:4-9). Here we see again, as we did last Sunday, the inadequacy of the Sinai Law given by God to Moses to overcome the sinful transgressions of Israel. Only in the New Testament through faith in Jesus Christ and baptism have the Christians been delivered from sin. We saw last Sunday how this blindness, on the part of the Jews, resulted in a lack of faith in the parable of the Good Samaritan where the Levite and the priest, both Jews, lacked the charity to care for the man who was attacked by robbers. In today’s Gospel (Luke 17:11-19), Jesus cures the ten lepers, one of whom is a Samaritan. Once again, it is the faithful Samaritan, the Gentile and outsider, who alone has enough charity to return to give thanks and glory to Jesus. ***“Were not the ten made clean? But where are the nine? Has no one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?” Lk. 19: 17***

Promise to Abraham

Dom Prosper Gueranger in his book, *The Liturgical Year Vol. II*, comments on the hope that was given to Abraham when he learned of the promise of the coming Messiah: ***“Look up to heaven, and number the stars, if thou canst! So shall thy seed be! (Gen. 15:5) Abraham was almost a hundred years old, and Sara’s barrenness deprived him of all natural hope of posterity, when these words were spoken to him by God. Abraham, nevertheless, believed God, says the Scripture, and it was reputed to him unto justice (cf. Gen. 15:6) And when, later on, that same faith would have led him to sacrifice,***

on the mount that son of the promise, his only hope, God renewed His promise, and added: ‘In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.’ Gen. 22:18 ...His faith, firm and, at the same time, so simple, gave to God the glory which He looks for from His creatures. ...Following in Abraham’s steps (cf. Rom. 4:12), there have come those multitudes, born for heaven, the children of his faith....Truly, then, the benediction of Abraham has been poured forth on the Gentiles (cf. Gal. 3:14). Christ Jesus, the true Son of the Promise, the only seed of salvation, has, by faith in His Resurrection (cf. Rom. 4:24), assembled from every nation (cf. Gal. 3:28) them that are of good will (cf. Lk. 2:14), making them all one in Him, making them, like Himself children of Abraham (cf. Gal. 3:29), and, what is better still children of God. (cf. Gal. 4:5-7). Gueranger, p. 311-3

Children of the Promise Not the Law

St. Paul tells us in today’s epistle to recognize that the Promise to Abraham was fulfilled in Jesus Christ: ***“The promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. He does not say, ‘And to his offsprings,’ as of many; but as of one, ‘And to thy offspring,’ who is Christ.”*** Gal. 3:16 Dom Gueranger comments on the effectiveness of the promised redeemer, Abraham’s offspring, compared to the Law of Sinai: ***“...St. Paul will declare the transient character of that legislation, which came four hundred and thirty years after a promise which could not be changed; neither was such legislation to continue, when the time should come for that Son of Abraham to appear, from whom the world was waiting to receive the promised benediction.”*** Gueranger p. 315 Similarly, Dom Gueranger quotes the Abbot Rupert on the spiritual meaning of the *Parable of the Good Samaritan* in relation to the law and promise: ***“Abbot Rupert, ‘bears on the history of that Samaritan, whose name signifies keeper; it is our Lord Jesus Christ who, by His Incarnation, comes to the rescue of man, whom the old Law was not able to keep from harm; and when Jesus leaves the world, He consigns the poor sufferer to the care of the apostles and the apostolic men, in the house of the Church ...Thus, the priest and the levite of the parable are a figure of the Law; and their passing by the half-dead man, seeing him, indeed, but without making an attempt to heal him, is expressive of what the Law did. True, it did not go counter to God’s promises; but, of***

itself, it could justify no man.'..." Gueranger, p. 315

Leprosy of Sin

The cure of the ten lepers by Jesus represents in a spiritual sense the delivery of men from the evils of sin. Only Jesus, the Promised one of Abraham, could accomplish this because He is the Son of God who alone can forgive sin. Dom Gueranger comments on the symbolic meaning of the lepers in relation to the Promise and the Law: "The Samaritan leper, cured of that hideous malady which is an apt figure of sin, in the company with nine lepers of Jewish nationality, represents the despised race of Gentiles, who were at first admitted, by stealth, so to say, and by extraordinary privilege, into a share of the graces belonging to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (cf. Mt. 15:24). The conduct of these ten men, on occasion of their miraculous cure, is in keeping with the attitude assumed by the peoples they typify, regarding the salvation offered to the world by the Son of God. It is a fresh demonstration of what the apostle says: *'All are not Israelites that are of Israel; neither are all they who are the seed of Abraham, children; 'but,' says the Scripture (cf. Gen. 21:12), 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called'*; that is to say, not they who are children of the flesh are children of God: but they that are the children of the promise are counted for the seed (cf. Rom. 9:6-8); they are born of the faith of Abraham, and are, in the eyes of the Lord, the true progeny....The lepers are made clean only while on their way to show themselves to the priests,That Law gave to the Sons of Aaron the power, not that of curing, but of discerning leprosy, and passing judgment on its being cured or not (cf. Lev. 13). " Gueranger, p. 323

Divine Power of the New Law

Dom Gueranger shows how the Law of Sinai has kept the Jews from recognizing the truth. "The time, however, has now come for a Law far above that of Sinai. It has a priesthood, whose judgments are not to concern the state of the body, but, by pronouncing the sentence of absolution, are to effectually remove the leprosy of souls (sin). The cure which the ten lepers felt coming upon them before they had reached the priests, ought to have sufficed to show them, in Jesus, the power of the new priesthood, which had been foretold by the prophets (cf. Is. 66:21-23); the power which thus forestalls and

surpasses the authority of the ancient ministration is sufficient evidence of the superior dignity of Him who exercises it... But the Jew is far from being ready to understand these great mysteries. And yet the Law had been given to him that it might serve him as a hand leading him to Christ, and without exposing him to err....Gratitude should have been uppermost in the heart of Juda; but pride took its place. He was so taken up with the honour that had been put on him that it made him lose all desire for the Messiah... He laid it down as a dogma that no divine intervention can ever equal that made on Sinai; that every future prophet, everyone sent by God, must be inferior to Moses; that all possible salvation is in the Law, and that from it alone flows every grace....nine have not even the remotest thought of coming to their Deliverer to thank Him; these nine are Jews. Jesus, to their minds, is a mere disciple of Moses, a bare instrument of favours, holding his commission from Sinai, and as soon as they have gone through the legal formality of their purification they take it that all their obligations to God are paid. The Samaritan, the despised Gentile, whose sufferings have given him that humility which makes the sinner clear-sighted, is the only one who recognizes God by His divine works, and gives Him thanks for His favours." Gueranger, p. 322-4

First Friday, 1 September 2017

Now is a good time to continue (or begin) the devotion to the "Nine First Fridays" of the Month. The Sacred Heart of Jesus promised to St. Margaret Mary: "I promise thee in the excessive mercy of My Heart that My all-powerful love will grant to all those who communicate on the First Friday in nine consecutive months, the grace of final penitence; they shall not die in My disgrace nor without receiving the Sacraments; My Divine heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment." There is no better way to honour the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus than doing the "Nine First Fridays" every month.

First Saturday, 2 September 2017

Our Lady told Sr. Lucia in 1925 "...I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months go to confession and receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary and keep me company for a quarter of an hour while

meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me." If only we would do what Our Lady asks, we would be assured of eternal salvation. Our Lady promises us all the graces necessary for our salvation if we keep *The Five First Saturdays!* Just think that when you are about to die the Blessed Virgin Mary will be there with you to help you get to heaven! **"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen"** How many times have you said these words in your lifetime?

Why the Rosary is so important!

"Continue to pray the Rosary every day."

Our Lady of Fatima to Sister Lucia

"Never will anyone who says his Rosary every day be led astray. This is a statement that I would gladly sign with my blood."

Saint Louis de Montfort

"You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary."

Our Lady to Blessed Alan de la Roche

"Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world." Pope Blessed Pius IX

"If you persevere in reciting the Rosary, this will be a most probable sign of your eternal salvation." Blessed Alan de la Roche

"The greatest method of praying is to pray the Rosary." Saint Francis de Sales

"When the Holy Rosary is said well, it gives Jesus and Mary more glory and is more meritorious than any other prayer."

Saint Louis de Montfort

"The Holy Rosary is the storehouse of countless blessing." Blessed Alan de la Roche

"One day, through the Rosary and the Scapular, Our Lady will save the world." Saint Dominic

"If you say the Rosary faithfully unto death, I do assure you that, in spite of the gravity of your sins, 'you will receive a never-fading crown of glory' (1 St. Peter 5:4)." Saint Louis de Montfort

"You must know that when you 'hail' Mary, she

immediately greets you! Don't think that she is one of those rude women of whom there are so many—on the contrary, she is utterly courteous and pleasant. If you greet her, she will answer you right away and converse with you!"

Saint Bernardine of Siena

"Recite your Rosary with faith, with humility, with confidence, and with perseverance."

Saint Louis de Montfort

"The rich in graces of all prayers; it is the prayer that touches most the Heart of the Mother of God...and if you wish peace to reign in your homes, recite the family Rosary." Pope Saint Pius X

"Never will anyone who says his Rosary every day become a formal heretic or be led astray by the devil." Saint Louis de Montfort

"Even if you are on the brink of damnation, even if you have one foot in hell, even if you have sold your soul to the devil as sorcerers do who practice black magic, and even if you are a heretic as obstinate as a devil, sooner or later you will be converted and will amend your life and will save your soul, if—and mark well what I say—if you say the Holy Rosary devoutly every day until death for the purpose of knowing the truth and obtaining contrition and pardon for your sins." Saint Louis de Montfort

"The Most Holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families...that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary."

Sister Lucia dos Santos, Fatima seer

"When you say your Rosary, the angels rejoice, the Blessed Trinity delights in it, my Son finds joy in it too, and I myself am happier than you can possibly guess. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there is nothing in the Church that I love as much as the Rosary."

Our Lady to Blessed Alan de la Roche

"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee! No creature has ever said anything that was

more pleasing to me, nor will anyone ever be able to find or say to me anything that pleases me more.” Our Lady to Saint Mechtilde