

Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost 5 November 2017

“Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” Mt. 22:21

Dom Prosper Gueranger in his book on the liturgy, *The Liturgical Year* Vol. 11 comments on today’s liturgy: “According to Honorius of Autun, the Mass of to-day has reference to the days of the Antichrist. The Church foreseeing the reign of the man of sin (cf. II Thess. 2:3) and as though she were actually undergoing the persecution which is to surpass all others, takes her Introit of this twenty-second Sunday from the Psalm *De profundis* (cf. Ps. 129).” Gueranger, p. 455 In the *Epistle* (Philippians 1: 6-11) St. Paul alludes to “*the day of Christ Jesus*” Phil. 1: 6 and 1:10 which is the day at the end of time when Jesus will come in power to judge all the world. Dom Gueranger comments on what this means: “St. Paul, in the Church’s name, again invites our attention to the near approach of the last day. But what, on the previous Sunday, he called the evil day, he now,...calls twice over *the day of Christ Jesus*.” Gueranger, p. 457 According to Dom Gueranger in the last days, the loss of truth is the greatest peril: “The diminution of truth (cf. Ps. 11:2) is evidently to be a leading peril of the latter times; for, during these weeks (Pentecost) which represent the last days of the world, the Church is continually urging us to a sound and solid understanding of truth, as though she considered that to be the great preservative for her children....To-day in the Epistle, she implored of them to be ever progressing *in knowledge and all understanding*, as being the essential means for abounding in charity, and for having the work of their sanctification perfected for the day of Christ Jesus. The *Gospel* (Mt. 22: 15-21) comes with an appropriate finish to these instructions given us by the apostle; it relates an incident in our Lord’s life, which stamps those counsels with the weightiest possible authority, viz., the example of Him, who is our divine Model. He gives His disciples the example they should follow, when, like Himself, they have snares laid by the world, for their destruction.” Gueranger, p. 462-3

“And I pray, that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge and all understanding...”

Phil. 1:9

For St. Paul, charity without truth is the cause of darkness and error. Dom Gueranger tells us how important is the truth which is shown brightly in the light of Christian civilization: “**The one ambition which rules and absorbs him (cf. Phil. 1:24-7) is that God, who has begun in them *the work which is good by excellence, the work of Christian perfection such as we know had been wrought in the apostle himself, may continue and perfect it in them all, by the day, when Christ is to appear in His glory (cf. Col. 3:4). This is what he prays for, that charity, the wedding-garment of those whom he has betrothed to the one Spouse (cf. II Cor. 11:2), may beautify them with all its splendour for the grand day of the eternal nuptials (cf. Durand, Ration., vi 139). Now, how is that charity to be perfected in them? ...Charity, they say, is the queen of virtues; it makes them take everything easily, even lies against truth; to give the same rights to error as to truth is, in their estimation the highest point of Christian civilization grounded in love. They quite forget that the first object of charity, God who is substantial Truth, has no greater enemy than a lie; ...When Christianity first shone upon mankind, it found error supreme mistress of the world. Having, then, to deal with a universe that was rooted in death (cf. Mt. 4:16), Christianity adopted no other plan for giving salvation than that of making the light as bright as could be; its only policy was to proclaim the power which truth alone has of saving man, and to assert its exclusive right to reign over this world. The triumph of the Gospel was the result.*” Gueranger, p. 457-9. This is why, as Dom Gueranger reminds us, the Church in today’s *Epistle* implores us to progress “*in knowledge and all understanding...*” Phil. 1:9, as being essential means of abounding in charity, and for having the work of their sanctification perfected for the day of Christ Jesus.” Gueranger, p. 462**

All authority comes from God

Dom Gueranger tells us of the importance of today’s Gospel for Jesus’ disciples who will have to overcome the errors of the world: “**It was the last day of Jesus’ public teaching; it was almost eve of His departure from this earth (Tuesday in Holy Week). His enemies had failed in every attempt hitherto made to ensnare Him; this last plot was to be unusually deep-laid. The Pharisees, who refused to recognize Caesar’s authority and denied his claim to tribute, joined**

with their adversaries, the partisans of Herod and Rome, to propose this insidious question to Jesus: *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?* If our Lord's answer was negative, He incurred the displeasure of the government; if He took the affirmative side, He would lose the estimation of the people. With His divine prudence, He disconcerted their plans. The two parties, so strangely made friends by partnership in one common intrigue, heard the magnificent answer, which was divine enough to make even Pharisees and Herodians one in the truth. But truth was not what they were in search of; so they returned to their old party quarrels. The league formed against our Jesus was broken; the effort made by error recoiled on itself, as must ever be the case; and the answer it had elicited, passed from the lips of our Incarnate Lord to those of His bride, the Church, who would be ever repeating it to the world, for it contains the first principles of all governments on earth.

“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's” (Mt. 22:21): it was the dictum most dear to the apostles. If they boldly asserted that we must obey God rather than men (cf. Acts 5:29), they explained the whole truth, and added: ‘Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God....The will of God (cf. Rom. 8:1, 2, 5 & 6): there is the origin, there is the real greatness of all authority amongst men! Of themselves, men have no right to command their fellow-men.’ Gueranger, p. 463-4

All law must conform to God's will

Dom Gueranger reminds us the important truth which Jesus, truth itself (cf. Jn. 14:6), pronounced to the Jews: **“But, in order that the law oblige, that is, be truly law, it is evident that it must be, first and foremost, conformable to the commands and the prohibitions of God, whose will alone can give it a sacred character by making it enter into the domain of man's conscience. It is for this reason that there cannot be a law against God, or His Christ, or His Church. When God is not with Him who governs, the power he exercises is nothing better than brute force. The sovereign, or the parliament, that pretends to govern a country in opposition to the laws of God, has no right to aught but revolt and contempt from every upright man; to give the sacred name of law to**

tyrannical enactments of that kind is a profanation unworthy, not only of a Christian, but of every man who is not a slave.” Gueranger, p. 465.

Modern Secular Society

When the laws of God break down and nations legalize practices, like abortion, contraception, same-sex marriages, euthanasia, etc. then we have a society that is opposed to Jesus Christ and is in the beginning stages of the Antichrist (cf. I Jn. 2:3 and II Thess. 2:3). The Pharisees were forerunners of those future antichrists because they refused to believe in the teaching on the rights and duties that belong to the State (Caesar) and God (the Church). St. Paul reminded the Philippians *“that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge and all understanding...”* Phil 1:9 As the laws of our modern secular society break down and people believe that because it is a law that they have a right to actions which are opposed to God's law, then we have a society which is in danger of anarchy in this world and eternal perdition in the next. They have not heeded the words of today's *Epistle* where charity has the understanding of truth: *“...that you may approve the better things; be sincere and without offense unto the day of Christ.”* Phil. 1: 10

The First Friday, 3 November 2017

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**

The Five First Saturdays

Saturday, 4 November 2017 is the First Saturday of November. 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!*