

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to John (John 12:20-30) *Jesus Predicts His Death*

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves Me. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ Stepping into Endless Glory

We would like to see Jesus ~ the deepest cry of every human heart. God made the human heart for none other than His Son Jesus (cf Colossians 1:16). St. Augustine said that the heart does not rest till it rests in God. It is evident that the preaching of Jesus was attracting many people even from other regions. Being the Eternal Word Himself, Jesus was able to preach the Good News with complete authority that no human being can. Those with an open heart cannot help being drawn by the attraction of His words and His miracles. These were the ones being saved by the Eternal Word proclaimed to them by Jesus Himself. Do I feel the same pulling force of God's Word as the Greeks had convincingly experienced to the extent of going to much trouble to look for Jesus? Do I read Scripture and meditate upon it with the attitude that it is Jesus speaking to me through His Word? *Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* (John 8:31-32). God's Word is truth (cf John 17:17). God's Word has the power to liberate and sanctify me.

Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. It was very difficult for the people to understand that Jesus had die in order to be glorified as Saviour of the world. In God's plan of salvation, Jesus has to die to destroy sin, death and the devil. Jesus pays for our sins by His own painful death on the Cross which won for us eternal life. He makes it easier for the people to understand this by comparing His own sacrificial death to a single grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying. Only upon dying, can the grain give rise to a new wheat plant which in turn can grow to produce many more grains of wheat. Similarly, as long as I am content to live my life according to my own likes and desires, not endeavouring to increase in personal holiness, my life remains a mere existence. I cannot bring the Kingdom of God to others especially those dear and near to me that the Lord has entrusted to my care. Only when I decide to 'die' to myself, and let Christ increase in me (cf John 3:30), then I can fertilise the ground for new growth in eternal life for myself and those around me.

After Mother Mary surrendered Herself at the Annunciation to do God's will, she was able to forget Her own concerns and to reach out to Elizabeth who needed Her help. In the same way when I surrender myself to God, making myself along with my time, energy, resources and all that I possess available to God, I become a pliable instrument anointed with the Holy Spirit to extend God's kingdom here on earth.

The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. The person who loves his life and lives only for the flesh, pleasures and enjoyment of this world will lose eternal life. The one who mortifies his flesh and bodily senses, denies himself and carries his cross daily for the sake of his soul and others, will earn his heavenly reward. **Christians are born into the world not to be conformed to the ways of the world (cf John 17:16) but to transform it (cf Matthew 28:19-20).**

Conversation with Our Lord

Precious Lord, You created me to share in Your eternal joy and glory, and to help expand Your Kingdom here on earth. For this high purpose was I born into this world. Just as You stepped into Your glory upon dying on the Cross, I too must enter and share Your eternal glory by the heroic death of my selfish nature and desires. Help me keep my mind on heavenly things, a strong contempt for the pleasures, splendour and riches of this passing world, aspire to have the kingdom of God in my heart and to do my part in drawing others to You. Immaculate Heart of Mary, please intercede for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.