

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (*Romans 8:16-17*)

The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection: We are all born to be saints - sons and daughters of God

Even before Creation, God willed us to be holy and without blemish before Him (cf. Ephesians 1:4). Even before we are born, God's plan for each and every one of us is to be a member of His family. Thus, He created us to be His sons and daughters by adoption through Jesus Christ. This amazing, generous gift of sonship of God changes everything greatly in our favour which only God can bestow upon us. Thus, St Paul exhorts us to open the eyes of our heart to realize and understand the glory of the greatness that belongs to God's calling to all His children. We are not worthy of this tremendous privilege but the precious Blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ imparts to us the righteousness that belongs only to Jesus Christ.

We are made by God and for God alone (cf. Colossians 1:16). The human soul is made to find its joy, glory and fulfillment in God alone. Thus, the soul does not rest till it finally rests in God. Sins weigh down our souls and we cannot feel the hunger of our souls for God. *As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God. When can I enter and see the face of God? (Psalm 42:2-3).* St Augustine says: *"To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek Him the greatest adventure; to find Him, the greatest human achievement."* Scripture tells us that God Himself is the glorious, eternal inheritance of His children. *Lord, my allotted portion and my cup, You have made my destiny secure (Psalm 16:5).* Our glorious, eternal inheritance makes our destiny secure and bright. When we possess God, we possess everything. It is a possession out of pure, mutual love that gives wholly oneself to the other.

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God (Romans 8:14). God gives us the Holy Spirit to walk on the true path. *For those who live according to the flesh are concerned with the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit with the things of the Spirit. The concern of the flesh is death, but the concern of the Spirit is life and peace (Romans 8:5-6).* Born with concupiscence, our weak sinful nature inclines us to look for pleasure and fulfillment in the passing things of this world. But the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth leads us in the true path. *The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in My Name - He will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you (John 14:26).* It is the Truth that will set us free – free from eternal damnation (cf. John 8:32). Christ is the Eternal Truth. *Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).* God's Word is truth (cf. John 17:17). In this era of grave error and confusion when false ideologies are promulgated like a religion, the eternal truths of our faith highlight to us what is true and false. By adhering courageously to Christ's teachings and Commandments even in the face of persecution and adversity, we can be sure we are walking on the true path and are being led by the Holy Spirit.

So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48). Embracing God's will which is incorporated in His Commandments and teachings will lead us to holy perfection. By His life on earth, Jesus teaches us how to live a life that is pleasing to God. *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the One who sent Me and to finish His work (John 4:34).* In our struggle to grow in holiness, we will constantly feel the internal conflict between the Spirit and our sinful nature. St Paul describes this inner battle very well when he lamented that he seemed to do the things he did not want to do and failed to do the things he wanted to do. Nevertheless, we know that God has given us every spiritual blessing in Christ (cf. Ephesians 1:3) and that the immense power of God in His grace is available at every present moment for us to overcome all temptations and trials we encounter on the road to holy perfection. Even from the evil things that happened to us, God can draw much good out of it for our welfare (cf. Romans 8:28). Thus, God asks us not to rely solely on our human power but open our hearts to His graces which are always sufficient to deal victoriously with any temptation or trial (cf. 2 Corinthians 12:9).

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, please accept my deep love and gratitude for making it possible for me to be a child of the Most High. Enlighten my mind and heart to the bright destiny that awaits me in my true home. As St Paul says, no eyes have seen, no ears have heard nor the human mind ever imagine the things that God has prepared for those who love Him (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:9). Indeed, creation awaits expectantly for the unveiling of the glory of God's children. As a child of the Most High, I am a co-heir with You to our Heavenly Father's glorious Kingdom. Give me all the graces I need to be made worthy of this great dignity and privilege. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.