

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (Psalm 95:7b-11)

Today, if only you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested Me; they tried Me, though they had seen what I did. For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known My ways.’ So I declared on oath in My anger, ‘They shall never enter My rest.’ The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection ~ Do not Put God to the Test

Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” (Luke 4:12). We put God to the test when we doubt His existence, His Goodness and whenever we sin against Him. Having doubts in God is a weakness in faith and a sin. The ancient Israelites had seen the power of God manifested in the mighty signs and wonders in Egypt, at the Red Sea and in the desert. Yet after all this wonderful experience of God, on encountering some difficulty in the desert, they tested God by doubting His Presence, saying “Is the Lord among us or not?” (cf. Genesis 17:7).

First Testimony of God: God’s Creation (cf. John 1:3). God’s signature is in everything He created. There is beauty, order, pattern, uniqueness, creativity and ingenuity in God’s creation. Scientifically, living and non-living matter are made up of basic building blocks, pointing to one Creator. Just looking at the colour intensity and feeling the texture of a little flower petal can put an open heart into an admiration mode for our Creator. *God saw all that He had made, and it was very good (Genesis 1:31). The heavens proclaim His righteousness, and all peoples see His glory (Psalm 97:6).*

Second testimony of God: God’s Son, Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 5:7-8). God is so much in love with His world that He sent His only Son that those who believe in Him may not perish but have eternal life – God’s life! (cf. John 3:16). Jesus came to reveal God, His Father and God’s inimitable divine love. With His heart on fire, Jesus came into our midst, borne incarnate as a little baby boy of Virgin Mary. Jesus taught St Philip that anyone who has seen Him has seen God the Father (cf. John 14:9). God’s fullness was pleased to dwell in His only Son. Jesus says, “My Father and I are one.” (cf. John 10:30). During His public ministry Jesus performed countless miracles attesting to His Divinity. God the Father witnessed to Jesus as His Son (cf. Matthew 3:17, Luke 3:22, Matthew 17:5) and so did the demons though without much enthusiasm! (cf. Mark 3:11).

Third Testimony of God: God’s Holy Spirit (cf. 1 John 5:7-8). The Holy Spirit of God is given to every human being. The Spirit is present in various degrees of fullness in everyone depending on how open the heart of that person is to God. It is the Holy Spirit that has given each person the natural virtues and abilities to discern between good and evil, light and darkness, and things of God and of the world. It is the Holy Spirit that leads each heart into all truth (cf. John 16:13) provided that the heart is open to the workings of the Holy Spirit and is cooperative with God’s grace.

If today You hear His voice harden not your hearts (cf. Psalm 95:7). Hardness of the heart arises as a consequence of habitual sin and, gives birth to doubts and mistrust in God. Do I strive to cleanse my heart frequently through the Sacrament of Reconciliation so that sins may not have a permanent mark on my heart and distance me from God?

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I come before You as Your little child in wondrous contemplation of Your majesty and glory as God and Creator of the universe. Help me to hold You in loving reverence and humbly know my place in the grand scheme of things. Before You, I am aware of my nothingness with the knowledge that all the good that I am is entirely from You, a cooperation with Your grace. Cleanse my heart of all hardness and pride that blind me. Help me avail of the power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation so that my failures and sins will never harden my heart. Just as nature testifies to Your greatness and obey Your commands, may my life testifies to what You have done for me. Help me practise the virtue of holy humility so that Your Spirit can work mightily in me. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, form my heart for Jesus only. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.