

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the First Letter of St. Paul to Timothy (*1 Timothy 2:1-6*)

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases **God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.** For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – God’s Purpose is always to Save

God’s immediate response to the fall of Adam and Eve – the sending of a saviour. Our first parents were given everything they need and more. They were living in a beautiful place, the Garden of Eden and God moves freely among them. They did not need to work for their food or shelter. They were gifted with a free will like God Himself. However, they used it to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit. God in His merciful love acted quickly to save them. God promised a saviour that would crush the head of the serpent (cf. Genesis 3:15) – the Deceiver, the Father of all lies, Satan. God’s saviour turns out to be His own beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, God Himself becomes intrinsically entwined with our salvation and redemption. Which parent has the generosity of spirit to send a son to die for a batch of ungrateful people? Only one who is blinded by unconditional love as is God, our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father’s personal and unconditional love for each and everyone of us is fully reflected in sending Jesus to be the sacrifice of atonement for our sins.

Jesus (meaning “God saves”) - a personal Saviour for everyone. In coming to earth, Jesus did not come as a conquering military ruler that would free the Jews from the dominion of the Romans. Instead He was born as a little vulnerable baby to a poor, simple family. He could have been born in a palace. Instead He lived a hidden life of hardship and sacrifice before His public ministry. To show His all-consuming love and to be a model in love, Jesus redeems everyone in a very personal way. Through His own wounds, His own blood, His own sufferings, His own death. Through His own wounds, He heals our wounds. Through His own Blood He sets us free, saves us from eternal damnation and gives us peace and reconciliation with God, the Father. Through His own sufferings, He strengthens us. Through His own death, He brings us to eternal life of true joy.

Jesus took on Himself the curse due to our sins. God allows His Son to take the curse of our sins by dying on the cross. *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” (Galatians 3:13, cf Deuteronomy 21:23).* Christ takes away from us our sins that condemn us, cancelling out its charges and nailing them to the cross. (cf. Colossians 2:14). For 33 years of earthly life Jesus prepared for the day when writhing in pain on the cross He would present His request to His Heavenly Father: *“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34).*

God’s great motivation to save is shown in His ever readiness to forgive. When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive, Jesus said, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” (cf. Matthew 18:21-22). In saying this, Jesus sets a standard for forgiving. This standard is based on pure, unconditional love. We are to forgive as often as is required of us. This is because this is how God will deal with us. God in His infinite merciful love is always ready to forgive the repentant sinner. His love for us is bigger than any sin we can ever commit. *Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool (Isaiah 1:18).* God never rejects the sinner who asks for mercy and forgiveness.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You are my blessed Saviour and I thank You with all my heart for all the sufferings and sorrows You endured for me. Because of Your Precious Blood which paid in full for all my iniquities I can stand before the throne of our Heavenly Father fully justified as if I had not sinned! Because of You I am raised to the dignity of no less than a child of God through adoption made possible by Your Precious Blood. Yes, I am a co-heir with You! Everything that belongs to You is also mine! For this I am reminded through St. Paul of the great hope to which I have been called in You (cf. Ephesians 1:18). In heaven with unveiled face, I will participate in Your glory upon glory and will become like You (2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 6:5, 1 John 3:2-3). For Your love and goodness to me, I pledge to You my undying love, deep loyalty and the offering of my life in service of Your Name. Jesus, You have given Yourself to me. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, obtain for me the grace never to withhold anything from Jesus. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.