

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Colossians (Colossians 1:24)

Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of His Body, which is the church. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – My role in God's Kingdom is unique and cannot be replaced

Through our Baptism, we are commissioned by Christ to be His Apostles. The root meaning of the word "apostle" means "one who is being sent", "a messenger", "an ambassador." By virtue of our Baptism, we share in the kingly, priestly and prophetic office of Jesus. Jesus comes to reclaim His Kingdom from the powers of darkness not by being a conquering ruler but by the perfect fulfillment of His Father's eternal, divine will through being God's Suffering Servant and offering His life for the atonement of all sins. *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).* We are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, to be instruments in establishing His Kingdom through our service to Christ in the fulfillment of the eternal, divine will. Jesus did not leave behind a sophisticated strategy or action plan for the coming of His Kingdom but instead relies on each of His followers to fulfill his/her missionary role through the power of His Spirit acting in each of them.

Christ is the Head, we are the mystical Body of Christ. *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27).* This is how close God made us to Christ! Each believer of Christ is a member of His Body! How this terrific truth ought to fill us with awe and transform us! Each individual part of the human body has its own specific role and function, contributing to the perfect functioning of the whole body. *For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others (Romans 12:4-5).* Each individual part, no matter how insignificant, is important in the overall optimal functioning of the whole body. The intelligent head cannot say to the lowly feet: "I have no need of you." It is only through the feet that the head can be brought to places.

"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4-5). St Paul is able to expound very well this saving truth regarding the Mystical Body of Jesus in his epistles as this truth was proclaimed to him by none other than Christ Himself when Paul was struck by a light from heaven that flashed around him, on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians there. This truth plays a big role in St Paul's conversion from an ardent persecutor of Christians to a zealous evangelist of Christ. *Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me. (Matthew 25:40).*

Each role is unique and cannot be replaced. The Kingdom of God is like a rich man with a big estate. To manage the estate properly, he gave each of his children, sons and daughters, a role depending on each's gifts and abilities. A few hardworking and capable ones may be able to fulfill the duties of the lazy or less capable ones more perfectly and efficiently but the man is more interested in seeing each and all of his children fulfilling each of their responsibilities to the best of their abilities. The role of each child is fulfilled in his unique way and the uniqueness of the child cannot be replaced.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for giving me a role in Your mission to save the world. Though I am but an insignificant member of Your Mystical Body the Church, nonetheless You want to see me fulfill my role. There may be others who can perform my role even more perfectly but my contribution is unique and no one can replace my part. Joined to Your Mystical Body by Baptism, the Christian apostolate becomes my responsibility, my mission. My heart rejoices that You share with me everything: Your life, Your love, Your Father, Your Mother, Your kingdom and inheritance, and even the mission of reclaiming Your Kingdom. May I always be grateful and walk humbly with You all the days of my life. Through my prayers, sacrifices and walking in Your footsteps, may I fight like a child of God would in the spiritual battle which needs to take place before the victorious coming of Your Kingdom. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk