

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians (Ephesians 3:17-19)

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – To be filled with the fullness of God

Unless we are filled with the fullness of God, we will always thirst and be unfulfilled. *Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28).* God made us for His glory. Our final rest and fulfillment are found in God alone. Weakened by sins, personal and original, a soul tends to walk on the path that offers the least resistance to his lower human nature. Unenlightened, the poor soul allows the inclinations of his body which constantly seeks earthly gratification to overcome the inclination of his spirit which seeks God and the higher things of God. Filled with earthly things and pleasures which depress the spirit, the soul is restless and unfulfilled. Thus, Jesus declared, *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty (John 6:35).*

Jesus said: "Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me (Luke 9:23). Jesus came to show us the way to the final fulfillment of our lives and eternal glory. It is to walk beside Jesus, carrying our own crosses every day and climbing Mount Calvary together. Every step upward is an achievement of our mastery over our self, chiefly over our pride which is the root of all sins. On reaching the top of Calvary, we are qualified to say together with St Paul: *I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ (Philippians 3:8).*

Guarding our mind. The human mind is an important battlefield of Satan. For a person who is weakened by pride and inordinate self-love, it is a mere easy task for Satan to insert thoughts which easily lead to sin: unloving, judgemental thoughts dwelling on the faults of others, on disliking or hating others, thoughts dwelling on personal hurts or humiliation at the hand of others, distracting thoughts during Mass or prayers, vain or evil thoughts or scheming, impure thoughts and fantasies, etc. Controlling our minds is a formidable interior battle that is never finished till the last moment of our life. Thus, St Paul warns us to guard our minds from conforming to the standards of this temporary world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds (cf. Romans 12:2) in holiness and righteousness by the Holy Spirit in us. Thus, we need to actively reject and throw out any lies or falsehoods that the evil one puts into our minds, and subject our minds and thoughts in obedience to Jesus Christ, the Truth (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5). A mind formed by the divine truths of our faith in Jesus Christ will be able to recognize lies and falsehoods that act against the knowledge of God.

Controlling our tongue. *Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear (Ephesians 4:29).* Though a little organ in the human body, the tongue has great power to bring down or uplift other people. St James warns us that the tongue has the power to corrupt the whole body and set it on a path to hell (cf. James 3:6). He tells us that if we can control our tongue, we can control the whole body (cf. James 3:2). *Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. (James 3:10).* When the mind is properly guarded, the tongue is also held in check.

Guarding our heart. *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it (Proverbs 4:23).* How many sins are committed out of passion of the heart! *Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires (James 1:19-20).* *Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry (Ephesians 4:26).* Not all emotions are from God, and we need to bridle those that lead us to do things that we do not want to do. A quick simple prayer can do wonders in controlling strong emotions of the moment.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, my true freedom is when I am released of all bondages which bind me to earthly things or creatures. I am made specially for heaven, and my final fulfillment is when I am totally empty of myself so that I may be filled to the measure of fullness of God. May I have the perseverance and courage to work tirelessly towards this indestructible hope and joy of my final destination which You have prepared for me even before I was born. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.