

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Philippians (Philippians 4:6-7)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – Trust in God's will and peace will be ours

Trust is a fruit of unwavering faith and deep love. To have faith in and love for God we need to know God and to experience His comforting presence. Jesus comes to reveal to us God His Father. Through Scripture, prayers and Sacraments we can come to a deeper knowledge of Jesus and God the Father. Ignorance is not bliss. Scripture tells us God's people are destroyed from lack of knowledge (Cf. Hosea 4:6). Here, the knowledge refers to knowledge of God's laws. God's laws are given to us to light up the way to walk in His righteousness leading to His salvation. Without God's laws we trip ourselves up in the paths of darkness which lead only to the eternal abyss.

To know God truly is to love Him above all things. Mental assent of the existence of God and His teachings is not enough if all knowledge of God is retained only in the intellect. If such were the case, God would simply become another subject, another topic, another activity, another obligation maybe even a tiresome one. God hides Himself from the proud-hearted. He hides Himself from those who are too busy to look for Him, from those who think they are doing well without His help, from those who do not bother to cultivate a personal relationship with Him. For these will see but never perceive, hear but never understand. *For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes (Matthew 13:15).* The mysteries of the Kingdom of God will never be made known to those who have no room in their hearts for God.

God gives us a heart so that we can love Him first and foremost, and then love others for the sake of God. The knowledge of what God has done for us has to be ruminated by the heart ever so often so that our passive sentiment can be transformed into active loyalty. Mother Mary shows the way. *But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in Her heart (Luke 2:19, 51).* We need to ponder in our hearts the divine truths of our faith ever so often. It is in our pondering, that our minds can transmit to our hearts the divine truths: God's divine love for us, His Sacrifice for us, His Promises, His Providence, His Power, His Sovereignty over everything. These must be given time to be imprinted on our hearts so that our love is deep and not a mere sentiment that cannot withstand persecution.

To experience the presence of God we need to look earnestly for Him, like a deer looking for flowing water in a desert. God made us for Himself, for His own glory. *My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God (Psalm 84:2).* When I am able to unearth my true inner self from all the numerous lesser loves that crowd my heart, I am able to feel the hunger my inner being has for the presence of God. This spiritual emptiness can only be satisfied by the presence of God, and can never be fulfilled by material things. Without the love of God in our heart, we cannot feel His Presence and our lives are empty even if in material sense we are living the so-called 'good life'. But once we respond to our inner longing and look actively for God, we will find that He is really closer to us than any other person we love.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, help me to preserve the treasure of Your peace in my heart. This peace, a peace which the world cannot give, is born of deep faith in and love for You. It is protected by trust. Help me to trust in Your will always. May I always remember that You will never forsake me, and that Your love for me will always remain strong and unwavering no matter how I feel. Your loving Providence which takes care of the worthless sparrows in the sky will similarly take care of my needs if I surrender them to You. Your power is there to protect me if I call out for it. You are the Lord of my life, and this is the reason that I can rejoice endlessly (Cf. Philippians 4:4). Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk