

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 – Our help is needed in God's global plan of salvation

God's greatest desire is to have everyone saved and inherit the glorious inheritance He has planned for each of His children. God, the Father loves us with such a burning passion that He thinks nothing of sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ into the world as an offering for our sins so that the gates of heaven are open to everyone provided they accept God's love and seek forgiveness for their sins.

Jesus lets Simon of Cyrene help carry His Cross. When Jesus was carrying His Cross up Mount Calvary He was totally exhausted. He was feverish and also had lost a great deal of blood. He scarcely had any energy left in His battered and scourged Body. When the soldiers forced Simon of Cyrene to help carry the Cross, Jesus humbly accepted. Despite being Son of the Almighty God, Jesus allows Himself to be put into a situation where He needs human help in the salvation of the world. Undoubtedly, He could have done it all by Himself but that is not the way of God. Jesus says: *Apart from Me you can do nothing* (*John 15:5*).

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27). Christ's holy Church is one with Him, forming His Mystical Body with Himself as its Head. The diverse members of His Church form the different parts of Christ's Body. *If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it* (*1 Corinthians 12:26*). Though members have different gifts yet all are from the same Holy Spirit, and are given by God for the common good of all. Thus, every part, no matter how weak or insignificant, is needed for the proper functioning of the body as a whole. The head cannot say to the feet: You cannot think so I don't need you. Each part is unique and its role in the overall functioning of the body is likewise unique.

Through our Baptism, we share in Christ's divine mission. Members of Christ's holy Church through Baptism and faith share in the three offices of which Christ is anointed by God the Father with the Holy Spirit: priest, prophet and king (cf. CCC 783). Thus, depending on the gifts each has been given, each has a unique role in God's plan of salvation. Sharing in Christ's priesthood, each is to intercede, pray for and offer sacrifices for the salvation of others. Sharing in the prophethood of Christ, each is to spread to others the Good News of God's unconditional love and Christ's offer of forgiveness of sins, and eternal life of joy. Sharing in the kingship of Christ, each is called to service for the glory of God and so extend His Kingdom on earth.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). This was the last command given by Jesus in the flesh before He ascended into heaven. It was a clear command to continue His saving mission. Shortly after He ascended, He sent the Holy Spirit which came down powerfully upon the Apostles on that first Pentecost. This same miracle-working Holy Spirit has also been given to us through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.* (*2 Corinthians 4:7*). Though we may be weak, fragile and totally ineffective in ourselves, yet we possess within our human weaknesses the power of the Truth. It is the same divine power that transformed the simple fishermen into powerful preachers of the Word during the first Pentecost.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, Your most ardent desire is that all the children of God be saved. For this very purpose, You were borne incarnate of the Virgin Mary so that You can die to save us and to bring us eternal life. You are the sacrificial offering for our sins because by our own good deeds alone, we cannot save ourselves. You are the only one sacrificial lamb which is acceptable to God because You alone are holy, sinless, without blemish and are divine. Yet You deign to give me, a poor unworthy sinner, a share in Your glorious mission. Help me imitate Your life of sacrifice and suffering. Help me to pray as You have prayed: with sincerity and passion. Through my prayers, sufferings and good deeds may I help bring many souls to Your Sacred Heart. May I show how much I love You by bringing many brothers and sisters to You. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for us sinners that together with Jesus we will form the heel that will eventually crush the ancient serpent (cf. Genesis 3:15). Thank you Jesus. Praise You Jesus.