

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians** (*1 Corinthians 10:13-14*)

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection – God will not test us beyond our limits**

**Testing is necessary to prove our faith and trust in God.** Faith needs to be proven in order to be true. God tests all those He loves i.e. everyone. The greater the role the soul plays in God's plan of salvation, the greater the trials God allows the soul to be subjected to. Jesus and Mary have been tested by God the Father like no other people. Jesus sweated blood in the Garden of Gethsemane as He prayed earnestly to God the Father that His will be done. Though Jesus is Son of God, for our salvation He was borne incarnate into our world as a human with a human will. As Jesus of Nazareth in the flesh, Jesus was tested and tempted greatly but His love for His Father overcomes all temptations. Mary was also sorely tested. She was given many wondrous promises through Angel Gabriel during the Annunciation but did not see the fulfilment of any of these promises in Her earthly life. Yet She was faithful to the end.

**Alongside each trial is a corresponding amount of grace for us to overcome the difficulty.** Would a loving parent subject his/her child to a test that the child cannot pass? Each present moment is unique and designed by God with its corresponding amount of grace. The more difficult the moment, the greater the amount of grace is available. Grace is a supernatural, free gift from God that gives inspiration to our will and inner strength to walk on the true path. We can close ourselves to God's grace by persisting in our own way of thinking and self-centredness.

**Worry and anxiety can shut us off from God's grace.** In Scripture God asks us many times not to be afraid or to worry. He has good reason to do this. Worry, anxiety and regrets whether of the past, future or present is given to us by the enemy of our salvation. Satan knows God's grace is only to deal with the present moment. Once we are overcome by worry or anxiety we are distracted from the present moment and are not open to God's grace for that moment. Therefore Jesus tells us: "*Fear is useless; what is needed is trust.*" (cf. Luke 8:50; Mark 5:36).

**Testing purifies our hardened hearts and increases our perseverance to walk on the true path.** *Son though He was, He learned obedience from what He suffered and, once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him (Hebrews 5:8-9).* Jesus in the flesh underwent suffering so that His human will is one with His Father's. Thus, He died on the Cross, earning for us the gift of eternal salvation. Though patient suffering, our weak human will will be moulded to be in conformity to God's divine will for us.

**All our sufferings have great redemptive value if united to that of Jesus.** *But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5).* Mother Church teaches us that the Church is the Body of Christ, He being the Head and we the Members. United in faith and love to the Head, our sufferings too will have redemptive value, sharing in the infinite merits of the suffering of Jesus. St Paul says: *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 (Colossians 1:24).* Through our Baptism, Christ gives us each a unique role in God's universal plan of salvation. Each ounce of suffering from His members is needed and never wasted.

### **Conversation with Jesus**

Precious Lord, I understand that if I want to follow You I must deny myself, pick up my cross and follow You. It does not matter what trial You send me for I know You are at my right hand side always, ever ready with Your grace. What is more important is how I respond. Open my heart and strengthen it with great love for and trust in God. Thus, may I never be overcome by worry or anxiety, but manfully carry my own cross, and we ascend Calvary together. Mary, my Mother of Perpetual Help, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.