

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (Romans 8:15-16)

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – Adhering to our identity as a true child of God

Our identity as a true child of God takes precedence over our other identities and roles. Our identity as a true child of God lasts forever! In life we may have many roles. We identify ourselves with the various roles in our family, in our work, in the circle we move in, in Church, in society, etc. When our time on earth is over and our eternal life with God in heaven begins, all earthly roles and identities will pass away except our identity as a true child of God. A strong identification as a true child of God and a life lived according to the dictates for a true child of God will ensure all the other earthly roles will be discharged in ways that will be pleasing to God and in accordance to all the things God stands for. Christ's promise: Seek first the Kingdom of God then all the things we need will be given to us (cf. Matthew 6:33).

A true child of God lives a sacramental life of grace even while on pilgrimage on earth. Even on earth, we need to start living a life of grace as a true child of God as we prepare ourselves to attain the glorious inheritance God has planned for each of His children. We are to be constantly and every day *made new in the attitude of our minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:23-24)*. Our true self is to be holy like God. Thus, we are called to holiness as God is holy and our final true home is with our Heavenly Father. Jesus tells us: *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48)*. We do not trivialize our weaknesses and faults but daily open up our minds and hearts to be transformed by the graces of the Holy Spirit within us. It is God's sanctifying grace that makes us holy. Through the Sacraments of the Catholic Church we receive grace in torrents that we need in order to live a sacramental life of grace.

A true child of God witnesses to the truth of the existence of God. Our duty towards God is to believe in Him and to bear witness to Him (CCC 2087). It is not enough to merely believe in God but we are also obliged by our faith to witness to the truth of God's existence to the people around us. Witnessing calls us to attest to the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our words, deeds and by how we live our life. Jesus said: *When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father - the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father - He will testify about Me. And you also must testify, for you have been with Me from the beginning (John 15:26-27)*. Witnessing to Christ also involves speaking out against evil. It takes a lot of holy courage to do this especially when the majority is silent and/or when it is perpetrated by a person in authority. A case in point is John the Baptist who spoke out against King Herod's taking his brother's wife for his own. To keep our faith alive, we have to witness to it as the situation calls for it.

A true child of God embraces God's holy divine will as the best plan for his/her life. *My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work (John 4:34)*. Jesus lives for only one purpose: to do the will of God the Father and to glorify Him. As disciples of Jesus, this is also the true purpose of our life on earth. We cannot do God's will unless we deny ourselves on a daily basis and constantly put God as first priority in our lives. Thus Jesus said: *Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me (Luke 9:23)*. In picking up our own crosses, we can follow Jesus up Mount Calvary where we can claim Jesus's victory over our sins and eternal death. This is the only path to God's Kingdom, the going will be tough but Jesus and our Blessed Mother will be with us every step of the arduous journey. God's grace will be more than enough for us to overcome any difficulty or temptation we may encounter on the way.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, thank You for making me a true child of God. God is my Father, and heaven is my true home. The climb up Mount Calvary is my true path to attain the glorious inheritance God has planned for me. Jesus, You said: *By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another (John 13:35)*. True love is the badge of my identification. Fill my heart with Your love so that I can witness to the truth of God's unconditional love, and Your promise of salvation when You died on the Cross for everyone. Help me keep in mind that though in the world I am not of the world and therefore work not for food that spoils but for food that endures to eternal life (cf. John 6:27). Mary, Mother of Salvation and best disciple of Jesus, pray for me and teach me imitate you. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.