

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (Romans 12:2)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection - Is my conscience a meeting place with God?

Evil is cunning, and masquerades as good with false promises. From time immemorial, evil has always shown itself to be very cunning. In the Garden of Eden, the ancient serpent presented the forbidden fruit to our first parents, Adam and Eve as something good to eat, saying: You will be like God. Eve was tempted at the attractiveness of the fruit and its false promise, forgetting the simple command of God not to have anything to do with the forbidden fruit. *But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it. (Genesis 4:7).* Once the door is open to temptation, it is much more difficult to overcome it. Temptation must be recognized for what it is, and it is wisdom to flee from it lest by delaying we be taken in by its external attraction and alluring false promises.

In our confused world of today, demonic deception runs deeper. The very same ancient serpent, the Father of all lies leverages on human pride, self-obsession, ego, and self-love to bring to greater heights his demonic deception over all humankind. This has been prophesied by Scripture. *On this mountain He (God) will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations (Isaiah 25:7).* In the world of today full of confusion and error, evil has been brought to new heights; and what is sinful is promoted publicly as desirable and good to have. Sinful lifestyles and sinful acts which clearly contravene God's law on marriage and sanctity of life are increasingly tolerated and accepted as alternative lifestyles and an expression of human rights and freedom of individual choice. In the spiritual world, there is no middle ground (Cf. Matthew 12:30). To tolerate evil and to do nothing about it is to support evil over good. There is no such thing as a "private" sin. A sin by a person affects adversely the spirituality of the whole of humanity (cf. CCC 1488).

Sin is not recognized as sin. Truth is compromised in our society. In the compromised conscience of the world, the truth of the difference between good and evil is not discerned. Herein lies the source of all the problems in the world. The world originally a beautiful place was marred and mutilated by the selfish and sinful acts of mankind on every level: individual, societal, national, global; and in every human sphere: economic, social, political, religious. Compromised consciences of politicians and legislators lead to the widespread practice of abuse of power and authority. The result is the same everywhere: sin gets legislated to become legal and lawful. Consequently, what in the eyes of God is immoral becomes in the eyes of man lawful and legal. Regardless of human opinion or human laws, what God regards as sin will remain sin, and at judgement God will judge according to His own divine standard not of man's.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2). It is only the truth that will set us free. The Truth is Jesus and all that He stands for: His commandments, His precepts and His teachings that He transmitted to His Church through Scripture, Sacred Tradition and Magisterium. To be able to discern falsehood and false doctrine and reject it, we must know and practise the divine truths of our faith. Ignorance is not bliss but will contribute to our downfall. *My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6).* Only through God's Word and His teachings can we be trained in holiness to walk on the true path to that place where eternal gladness will never end.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, the world is full of error and confusion because it is not living according to Your precepts. It has denied the Truth and has embraced a false ideology of the primacy of self and the importance of material success. Form my conscience in Your divine truths. Help me build my life upon Your Word. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, give me the gift of discernment that I may always know the truth of the difference between good and evil, and always choose good over evil. It is the truth that will set me free, free from sin and from all error and confusion. May all my words, thoughts and action be based on holy love which is holy truth. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.