

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (Romans 5:5)

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection ~ The holy love the Spirit pours into hearts will overcome the evil in the world

In God's world, holy and divine love will reign supreme. In truth and in righteousness which belong only to God, God commands us to love Him above all else, then to love others as much as we love ourselves for the sake of God. God made us to be His children, members of His own family. *He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will (Ephesians 1:5).* God is love (cf. 1 John 4:8). God is the origin of all pure, holy and divine love; and all His thoughts, desires, will and actions are rooted in holy and divine love. Thus, Jesus calls us to be like God the Father: *Be perfect as Your Heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48)* so that we are made fit for heaven where holy and divine love reign supreme.

Holy love is our mission. As our final destination is heaven, the only road to walk is holy love. The badge that will identify us as disciples of Christ is love. Thus, Jesus said: *By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.* (John 13:35). Holy love is also the mission of Jesus. *For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).* By coming to our human world in the flesh, Jesus teaches us how to love. He teaches us how to be obedient to God unto death. He teaches us how to divest ourselves of every obstacle that stands in the way of our love for God, to become nothing so that God's will can be accomplished in us. *Jesus Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness (Philippians 2:6-7).*

God gives us the power to love even our enemies. We cannot attribute the love we have in our hearts to our own goodness. The love in our hearts does not originate from ourselves. We love because love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 5:5). Love is a free gift that God pours into hearts that are open to receive His gifts. God asks us to love our enemies for His sake. It does not matter if our enemies do not deserve our love. God asks us to see Him in others even our enemies. Jesus says: *Whatever you do to the least of My brothers you do to Me (cf. Matthew 25:40).* Whatever God asks of us, He will give the corresponding grace for us to do it. St Paul said: *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me from within (cf. Philippians 4:13).*

Evil can only be conquered by holy love. Jesus came in the flesh to demolish the kingdom of Satan and to reclaim God's Kingdom. This, He did by love through His unflinching obedience to His Father's will, living a life of service to others, sacrifice and self-denial. Thus, He did not come as a conquering military ruler born in a palace but came as a little baby born into poverty, unknown except for some simple shepherds who spread the good news of His incarnate birth. For the sin of rebellion and disobedience, Jesus demonstrated obedience to His Father unto death. **In love, God requests us to be victims of love.** *Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them (Luke 6:28-29).* To be a victim of love is to be like Jesus who, though innocent and sinless, receive all the evil done to Him without retaliation but return love for evil, saying: *"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."* (cf. Luke 23:34). Jesus demonstrates true love conquers all evil.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, may Your Kingdom quickly come into all hearts. Your Kingdom cannot be established in hearts unless Your truth triumphs, You are given Your rightful place in all hearts and Your loving, eternal will become ours. Pour down Your Holy Spirit in great torrents upon all hearts especially those that yet have to be reclaimed by You. Through the action of Your Spirit, give us all the graces, favours and strength to love You as You love us and fulfill Your will in every present moment. Then, evil will disappear and earth will be like heaven, for with God all things are possible. Mary, our Mother of Salvation, pray for us. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk