

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 10:34-36*)

Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. For I have come to set a man 'against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's enemies will be those of his household.' The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Our Unity in Christ is founded on His Truth

Truth will expose those who love God and those who do not, and set them against each other. *Jesus said: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword (Matthew 10:34).* It seems that what Jesus said here contradicts sharply with what He stands for. Isn't Jesus the Prince of Peace? (cf. Isaiah 9:6). True peace comes from repentance on the part of sinners resulting in reconciliation and peace with God. Without this condition in which God is in the centre, all other types of "peace" are not of much use, it is fleeting, it does not last. This is the type of peace Jesus has no interest in bringing to earth: a false, superficial peace that rests solely on the approval of man and political correctness but does not care about pleasing God or fulfilling His holy commandments. But the weapon of Jesus to bring true peace to our troubled and confused world is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, which is Truth.

Only the Truth will set us free from our sins and bring us to perfect unity with God and with others. *Jesus said: "If you remain in My Word, you will truly be My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32).* God's truths are absolute and unchanging whether or not they are believed in and accepted by people. Lack of belief or rejection by unbelievers does not change anything about God's eternal truths. *Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).* Jesus is the Truth that will unite us to our Heavenly Father. True peace comes from the shedding of the Precious Blood of Jesus which paid the price of our sins and brings us redemption (cf. Colossians 1:20). That is why Jesus said the world cannot give the peace which only He can give. *Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid (John 14:27).* **Only Jesus can give the true peace our heart, mind and soul crave.** This is the peace that neither a fat bank account nor fame nor the love of the whole world can ever give.

Jesus is the key witness of Truth because He is the Truth itself. *Jesus answered (Pontius Pilate), "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice." (John 18:37).* Jesus came to reveal the Truth to us, the truths that our innermost heart seeks. The truth that God loves each and every one of us beyond our human imagination. The truth that we are so precious to Him, He made us His children through Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son Whom He sent to our world to redeem us from our sins. The truth that God wants everyone to be saved and to enjoy His eternal life, a kind of life that is so wondrous that eyes have not seen, ears have not heard nor can we ever imagine (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:9). The truth that He cares so much for us that He knows exactly the number of hairs on our head (cf. Matthew 10:30) and keeps record of every tear we shed (cf. Psalm 56:8). A love so strong that we are always on His mind (cf. Psalm 139:17). How privileged we are!

We are also called to be witnesses of the Truth (cf. John 15:27). To witness to the Truth, we have to remain in the Truth of Christ. To remain in the truth of Christ, we need to adhere to God's Word, Commandments and divine teachings in our everyday life. Through the way we live our life in imitation of the life of Christ, we give witness to the Truth. Giving witness to the truth also involves fighting the evil that is in us and around us. Through His example, Jesus teaches us to defend the truth with every strength and courage He gives us through His grace. Jesus gave up His life through His witness to the truth that He is the only begotten Son of God. St John the Baptist gave up his life through witnessing before a king the truth of the sanctity of marriage. It will not be easy but Jesus has this to say: *Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way (Luke 6:22-23).*

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, God the Father sent You to us so that when the times reach their fulfillment, all things in heaven and on earth will be united in You (cf. Ephesians 1:10). All authority in heaven and earth has been given to You by the Father (cf. Matthew 28:18). Give me all the graces I need to follow in Your footsteps in order that I may always witness to Your Word, which is Truth even in the face of persecution and adversity. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.