

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (*Romans 8:35-39*)

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? As it is written: "For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered." No, **in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through Him who loved us.** For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – In Christ we are overcomers of all adversities

God's love, the most powerful transforming power in the universe. It is only God's love that can and will conquer all evil in this world. It is the sole force that moves God the Father to allow His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ to lower Himself to be borne incarnate as a human being into our sinful world, and to undergo further humiliation when Christ offered Himself on the Cross as the perfect sacrifice for the redemption of all mankind. It is through God's love that the sinless Son of God was made sin for our sakes so that in Christ we can become the righteousness of God, be declared not guilty, be no longer under any condemnation and can stand in God's holy presence (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:21). It is God's love that brings us forth from nothing into being to become members of God's family and to partake of His eternal joy and glory. God's love is the most wondrous thing on earth. **Every morning, we should ask the Lord to refill our heart with His love, and He will do it.**

To retain God's image in us, we cannot be deprived of God's love. When God's love in our hearts is lost through our sins, we lose the true nature in which we are created in God's image. We were created out of love, to know God, love and serve God, and to find fulfillment in God. Without God's love in our hearts, we cannot stand in Christ's righteousness; we will be condemned by our own sins. Only love of God can transform sinners which we all are into great saints in accordance to God's will. Love of God empowers us to do all the beautiful and difficult things that make us Christ-like even in our human weaknesses and frailty. Going against worldly wisdom, it empowers us to overcome our naturally sinful self to put ourselves last, forget about our preferences and entitlements, humbly pick up our cross and walk faithfully in the footsteps of Christ. It is God's love that puts us on the earth, and it is by walking in God's love that we will win the gates of heaven. Thus, Jesus says: "*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself*" (*Matthew 22:37, 39*). We would not be able to love our neighbor truly and unconditionally unless we love God foremost, above all things and people. **Love of God is the power that enables us to love others truly and unconditionally.**

Sin distances us from God and makes us less receptive of His graces. As St Paul says, there is absolutely nothing, whether person, thing or force, whether in existence or to come into existence, that has the power to separate us from God's love. Even Satan with all his diabolical army cannot separate any of us from God's love. The only thing that can distance us from God is sin (cf. Isaiah 59:2). Sin is the worst thing in the universe as it is the only thing that distances us from God. *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (*Romans 6:23*). The world either does not recognize sin or trivialize it but we know better than to do this. The debt of our sins was paid by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Sin enslaves. *Jesus answered them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin* (*John 8:34*). Thus, it was no wonder Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) soon after His resurrection, giving divine power to His Apostles to forgive sins. Having been freed of slavery to sin at great cost to God, we would be foolish to allow ourselves to be enslaved again through our complacency and tolerance of the presence of sins in our soul. *So if the Son of God sets you free, you will be free indeed* (cf. *John 8:36*). **We must cherish this freedom that only God can give.** Through frequent Confession, we can keep our soul free of the stain of sins.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, through Your Precious Blood shed in love on Calvary, You free me from slavery to sin and give me the power to overcome all temptations and to grow in holiness. Open my heart and fill it with Your love. Help me love You more. Give me the graces to love You as You love me. Let my love for God be strong so that I can love others truly and unconditionally. Give me the grace to abhor sin like You do so that I will be very vigilant and fight temptation with an all-out, sincere effort. In doing so, help me keep my soul in the state of grace in order that I may always remain in Your love. True love is my Origin, true love is my Way, true love is my Mission, true love is my final joyful Destiny. True love will empower me to overcome all things. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus present in all the tabernacles of the world be adored, praised and glorified forever! Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.