

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Luke (*Luke 2:22-23, 25-33*)

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as You have promised, You now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel." The Child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about Him. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ The Greatness of Littleness

The 'great' ones missed the Visitation. The scribes, teachers of the law, the Jewish elders, the chief priests were all learned in the Law and Prophets and expected to be able to recognize the coming of the Messiah. However, most of them were not able to recognize when Grace appeared in its fullness, in the flesh in their midst. Their hearts were not in a state to recognize, accept and welcome their Creator, their Lord, their God. Instead they planned to do away with Him.

Simeon had the heart of a little child. Simeon was a simple, unassuming elderly man, a priest of the tribe of Levi. Exteriorly, there was nothing outstanding about him, practically a nobody in his society. But God noticed him. Like many others, he was waiting for the Messiah. Unlike many others his heart was not obscured by the things of the world nor preoccupation with self. With such docility and purity of heart, the Holy Spirit's inspirations could be promptly obeyed by Simeon. At the right moment Simeon was prompted by the Holy Spirit to encounter Baby Jesus. Eagerly, Simeon fulfilled his divine mission as a witness to God's visitation on earth, and he gave God due praise and thanksgiving.

Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children (Matthew 11:25). Though Jesus was officially rejected by the upper echelon of the Jewish people, He attracted the poor and the simple in society in great numbers. These are the ones who could accept the concept of a saviour that did not come as a triumphant military ruler. These are the ones who could understand His teachings though spoken in parables.

Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). The scribes, teachers of the law and the Jewish elders were set in their own way of thinking, a way that is much in common with the world around them. They were of the world. Like many others, they were focused on their own agendas, seeking worldly success and human approval. Exteriorly they appeared to be serving God. The purity of their hearts was obscured by inordinate attachments, passions, disorderly ambitions and self-serving desires. Truth was obscured by pride and disorderly self love. The light of the Holy Spirit was not in their hearts and they failed to see God when He appeared to them. What a great tragedy!

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I come before You as a little child to be transformed by Your love and mercy. I know that only with the trusting open heart of a little child can I see the work of Your hand in my life and follow the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Help me cast out from my heart all disorderly attachments, pride and self-serving love so that the Holy Spirit may be able to work in my soul to cultivate fruits of virtues that will last. Help me to be simple and steadfast in faith, true to the Gospel and love You with an undivided heart. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, form my heart for Jesus only. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.