

New Brighton, Sunday 17th July 2022

6th Sunday after Pentecost

“Perfect Thou my going in Thy paths”¹

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost

Dear brethren,

The offertory antiphon we will hear in a few minutes echoes the one from Sexagesima Sunday. Once more, our Holy Mother the Church places in front of our eyes the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, to be contemplated, adored, venerated.

For the Sexagesima, we heard the parable of the sower, figuration the word of the lord, planted in our hearts to grow and bring fruit.

Since then, we contemplated again the redemption and the mystery of the Cross at calvary. We saw our divine redeemer offering His life for our salvation. And now, we benefit every day the graces, flowing down over our heads, from his Sacred Heart, opened with the spur of the soldier.

Who could not be moved with gratitude, at least, before such a dedication and love for creatures?

Nevertheless, we need more perfection to not fail in our Faith, received by gift at baptism. This is the intention of the Offertory antiphon. At Sexagesima, we asked our Lord to strengthen it, to be able to follow Him everywhere he wanted to go. But at that time we couldn't realise how far this would take us: to the Death of the calvary.

Now we know a bit more, we still need to be strengthened to not fail, while we received everything.

When Jesus gave the Jews a token of the Holy Eucharist, multiplying the breads to feed them, a few days later, he told them that they would need to eat His flesh and drink His blood to receive eternal life; a lot of them misunderstood Him, and left Him.

When we are given the grace to discover a bit more the mystery, we should not give up with the difficulties to penetrate more and more the intimacy of the Divine Life. Jesus is unveiling Himself, to share with us the treasures of His divine Heart.

To understand him more and more, to be more and more united to Him, we must be close to Him. There is only one way for that, the one He gave us through the Sacraments of the Holy Catholic Church.

We were given the grace of Faith, Hope and Charity, through the Sacrament of Baptism, when, thanks to the Sacrifice of Calvary, we've been dead, spend three days in the sepulchre

¹ Ps XVI, 5.

(that's the meaning of the three crosses made by the priest upon our forehead with the baptismal water) and risen with Him, being given the divine life of Charity.

Now that we are living with Christ, a sinner's life would be truly opposite. Since our Baptism, we do not need to serve Satan and the sin anymore. We only need to live from and with the strength of this divine Life. As we are dead to the sin, we no longer owe it anything.

We, therefore, need to receive the grace of fidelity to Jesus, with the frequent reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist.

As we read in the gospel a few minutes ago, this bread of life is multiplied for us, as often as we need, and when the faithful received its part, the leftovers are kept preciously to be used later, for nothing being lost.

All the texts of the mass from this 6th Sunday after Pentecost are after this idea of us being incorporated to Christ. The Collect asks Jesus to "graft in our hearts the Love of Thy Name"². In return, God, by grace, will nourish and keep safe what's good in us. This transformation with and by Christ is presented to us through the Epistle to the Romans, when St Paul explained the richness of the baptism³. Then the Gospel reminds us the first announcement of the Holy Eucharist⁴: Jesus is giving us the bread to feed this union between Him and us, to grow towards eternity, when it will flourish and live forever.

Everything has been prepared and proposed to us. But, as you know, unfortunately, it's not working all the time, due to our unworthiness, our weakness, the leftovers of our past... It's not like magic. Jesus wants us to cooperate to his grace, to his plan. He wants to give us an eternal reward, but he wants us to merit it throughout our life on Earth.

We need to offer prayers, sacrifices, to kill upon the altar of the cross our pride and selfish love, which always leaves us satisfied with ourselves, but not for long. We need the grace. We need the help of Jesus. Although this is given to us thanks to the Baptism and the Redemption of the Cross, we can always ask for more.

And the secret prayer of today's mass is expressing this request: "be appeased, O Lord by our supplication, and graciously accept these offering of Thy people"⁵.

Answering our supplication, the Lord said in the Gospel: "Misereor super turbam [...ne] deficient in via", "I have compassion on the multitude that they may faint on the way home"⁶. Home is Heaven. Our Lord is full of mercy, love and compassion for our weaknesses if we are truly sorry for our mistakes, wish to amend our life, follow His divine law, make our best to live accordingly to His desires for us. If we are faithful to Him as He is to us, His grace will never miss us, and we will be insured a safe path to Heaven, to sing with the Angels His praises and glory.

We are singing them in anticipation with the Communion antiphon: "I will offer a sacrifice of jubilation. I will sing and recite a psalm to the Lord"⁷.

² 6th Sunday after Pentecost, Collect.

³ Rm, VI, 3-11.

⁴ Mark, VIII, 1-9.

⁵ 6th Sunday after Pentecost, Secret.

⁶ Mark, VIII, 2.

⁷ Ps XXVI, 6.

Let's make this journey back home together, strengthen with the bread of life to praise Jesus forever, and enjoy the eternal reward in the company of the Angels.

Amen.