

New Brighton, Sunday 7th August 2022

9th Sunday after Pentecost

“If you had known, in this your day, even thou, the things that are for your peace!”¹

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Although we're not yet finishing the liturgical year, and the usual gospels warning us about the end of this world, today, our Holy Mother the Church, in her divine wisdom, is offering us this lamentation of Jesus upon Jerusalem, who didn't acknowledge on time, that salvation was brought to her.

The prophecy of Jesus was realized forty years later, with a civil war, and finally the fall of Jerusalem, put to ruins and flames by the roman armies led by Titus. The history tells us that in their madness, due to hunger and difficulties of a long siege, the defenders of the temple of Jerusalem set themselves fire to the city and the temple, while the roman armies were trying to preserve the splendid monument and the city.

The roman soldiers were sent to punish the people because of their riot, but all along their military operation, it seems that they encounter many difficulties, like if God Himself was trying to give one last chance to His beloved chosen people, holding the revenge's arm, to offer salvation, providing repentance.

This long page of the history of the roman empire and the province of Judea was the accomplishment of the prophecy of Jesus we read this morning.

The way it happened, as I briefly told you the main facts, shows again the great Mercy of God for those He elected, and fulfil the criteria of the biblical prophecy:

- Report of the iniquity of the people
- Threat of punishment
- Call to conversion
- Realisation of the punishment if conversion didn't happen.

Jesus saw with his own eyes the iniquities of some of the members of his people, who were mainly the leaders, pharisees, priests and doctors. Those he loved with his whole heart, were the matter of a special attention: how many times do we hear different speeches of Jesus to the pharisees or other chiefs of the people.

He warned them several times, but always wanted their conversion. Some did, like Joseph of Arimathea, or Nicodemus... Many were frightened because of Caïphas, the High Priest.

This Prophecy we heard today was a token of mercy given to the pharisees: a sort of deep prayer of Christ, with tears and sighs of Christ. Jesus begged the conversion of Jerusalem!

Why, would you say, such a long part over a moment of History which happened two thousand years ago?

¹ Luke, XIX, 42.

His lamentation of Christ was a prophecy which has been already realised! Why should we care about it?

The words of Christ were said at one moment in our history, but they resound in eternity!

Christ is concerned with our salvation; He wept over the pharisees and Jerusalem, but also over our iniquities and lack of fidelity, trust, faith, hope, charity...

Jesus was about to give His life for the salvation of the world. He foresaw, in His divine science, that most of His sufferance would be wasted for many. Today, we contemplate Jesus crying and weeping, begging for our conversion, because we didn't know the time of our visitation.

Is everything lost? Is it hopeless?

Let's get back to the teaching of History. Jesus' prophecy took forty years to be fulfilled.

While we hear this prophecy today, it means Jesus is giving us some more time to amend our lives, to practice penance and mortification for our wicked past, to increase with the help of the Grace, the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, received through the sacrament of Baptism.

In his Bounty, God allowed us some more time to come back to him, to become true sons of God, to receive only one tear of Jesus in our heart, to be transformed just by hearing the cry, seeing our beloved Saviour weeping for us. How could we not be moved in such contemplation of the care of our Redeemer for our salvation?

Let's claim for Justice and Mercy! Jesus wants to offer them to us. Let's not be afraid of the justice. Let's welcome the Mercy. These two elements of the ocean of Love of the Sacred Heart, that we could understand from the blood and water pouring out the open side of Christ, dead for our sins upon the Cross.

"The Justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts and judgment sweeter than honey and the honeycomb: for thy servant keepeth them"², we will read shortly in the offertory antiphon.

"God is my helper, and the Lord is the protector of my souls"³, we read in the Introit.

May our reception of Thy Holy Sacrament, O Lord, both purify us from sin and grant us unity in Thy service"⁴, we will read in the Postcommunion.

The confidence we must have, is comforted at the reading of these.

After placing in front of us a solemn warning of what could be ours if we do not answer the call of Christ to become saints, the Church, knowing our fear, presented us at the same time, the comfort we will find in God's grace, through the Sacrament of Penance (Offertory) and Eucharist (Communion & Postcommunion). The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a part of the prophecy being realised in us when we truly and devoutly attend it. We received and are transformed through the grace of Christ.

² Ps XVIII, 9-12.

³ Ps LIII, 6.

⁴ Mass of the 9th Sunday after Pentecost, Postcommunion.

Christ wept upon Jerusalem before offering His Passion. The tears he cried could be represented at mass with the sprinkle of Holy Water, this powerful sacramental we received so often without paying any attention, before the offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass, renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

So many tears, so many warnings, and still, we haven't done anything! While we receive them, it's still time to amend ourselves.

Let's not waste any longer all these graces poured upon us. Let's profit one more time from all these gifts offered to us.

Our Lady herself came upon Earth to weep over the ingratitude of men. At La Salette, she complained to two children, Mélanie and Maximin, that she could not hold any longer the arm of her Son. She asked for penance and conversion, renewing one thousand and nine hundred years later the prophecy of her son for the world. Since 1846, so many outrages were made against Christ and the Saints. Our own sins added extra weight in the balance of the iniquities of the world.

Let's heartedly answer the tears of our dear redeemer and His beloved Mother! Let's hear the call of conversion begged from us this morning!

Penance and abandon, to the grace of God are the keys to escape the punishment of the prophecy. Do not follow the example of these Jesus loved, and despised Him!

Penance and grace are the key for the Kingdom of Heaven, to enjoy with Our Lady and the court of Angels and Saints, a deserved crown of Glory.

Amen