

New Brighton, Sunday 1st January 2023

Circumcision of Our Lord

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

“Beloved: The grace of God our Saviour has appeared to all men, instructing us, in order that, rejecting ungodliness and worldly lusts, we may live temperately and justly and piously in this world.”¹

Nothing better to be heard than these words of the Apostle of the Gentiles to begin a new year. As we are starting a new civil year, his advices are given to remind us our duties of daily sanctification. We know that the time which is given to us is short. How many times did we say yesterday and in the last days of this year 2022, that the past year was quick and we can't remember how fast it went? Yes, that's true, a new year reminds us how time is flying. The only question we truly need to answer is not how, but what did we do of this time? How did we spend it? Waste sometimes, unfortunately.

This time on Earth has been offered to us by our Creator and Redeemer, for us to follow him on the path of perfection and sanctification.

“The great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shows himself to us, in these days of his mercy, in order to instruct us, will come to us, in a second coming, in order to give us our reward. The beginning of a New Year tells us, plainly enough, that this last day is fast approaching. Let us cleanse ourselves from all iniquity, and become a people acceptable to our Redeemer, a people doing good works.”²

A New Year Day is a time for good resolutions for the year to come. Most of the time we think a bit, promise a few things, and don't hold any. When we do that, we look like worldly people who say things just to fill up the blank of the conversation, but don't say anything worth of any interest. Who are we if we do promises and don't hold our word?

We asked at the beginning of this first Mass of the year, the blessing of the Holy Ghost for the year to come. Our Holy Mother the Church attached a plenary indulgence to the singing of the *Veni Creator* on the first day of the year, to cleanse ourselves from any sin and pains attached.

As some extra graces were given to us, we should be able to take these resolutions we missed all along these last years. We don't need to take many, but just one, simple one. No needs for being too big, or visible, as holiness mostly happen in hidden and small places. Just one little thing we promised today to do, to change, to amend, in order to grow up in holiness. No needs either to look at our neighbour to see how fast he's going and doing. Let's just concentrate upon our practise of the virtues, starting with the greatest of humility.

¹ Tit., II, 11-12 (Epistle of the Mass for the 1st January)

² Dom Guéranger, The Liturgical Year, 1st January

On that matter, Our Lady will definitely be our model and master. We are honouring Her today alongside Our Lord. She watched the circumcision of Our Lord we are celebrating today, and she knew that was the first step of the sacrifice of Her Son. Today again, she is watching us, guiding us, expecting us to do that first move towards Her and Her Son.

“And now, what shall we give in return to this Saviour of our souls for the Circumcision, which he has deigned to suffer, in order to show us how much he loved us? We must, according to the teaching of the Apostle, circumcise our heart from all its evil affections, its sins, and its wicked inclinations; we must begin, at once, to live that new life, of which the Infant Jesus is the sublime model. Let us thus show him our compassion for this his earliest suffering for us, and be more attentive, than we have hitherto been, to the example he sets us.”³

May Our Lady, Mother of God, assist us in this new year, this new gift from our Lord.

Happy, blessed and holy new year!

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

³ Dom Guéranger, The Liturgical Year, 1st January