

Birkenhead, Sunday 18th June 2023

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

“Humiliámini sub poténti manu Dei, ut vos exáltet in témpore visitatiónis.”¹

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

“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in the time of visitation; cast all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”

The recent solemnities we celebrated through the Liturgical Calendar supported our desire to follow Our Lord always closer. The feasts of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacred Heart of Jesus reminded us again that He came here on earth to be offered as a victim of Love for our sins.

Between the two feasts we tried to prepare our hearts and excited our devotion towards the Sacred Heart, asking at the end of the litanies:

“Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, Make our hearts like unto Thine.”²

We asked for this virtue of Humility to nobody else than Our Lord Himself,

“Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names: That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.”³

This virtue of Humility is hard to obtain, as it goes deeply against our proudful and distorted nature, wounded because of the original sin. We are in need to ask for it with a great consistency, but moreover with great patience towards ourselves and meekness towards our neighbours.

The spiritual battle for our own holiness is to be abandoned to Our Lord and His grace, following His holy steps, emptying ourselves and being entirely offered to His good will. It's not that we shouldn't do anything anymore, but, on the very contrary, this offering of ourselves is the core of the battle: this is when and where it is so hard to any of us to do it so perfectly.

¹ 1 Pet., V, 6. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost, Epistle.

² Litany of the Sacred Heart, final verse

³ Philip., II, 6-11.

We completely renounce to ourselves and our own will, willingly entrusting everything that belongs to us to his Divine Will.

God's grace will support us in this offering of ourselves, and this renunciation will be the measure of our love for Him: the more we renounce, the bigger His Love will be and the nearer we will remain to Him.

Since Jesus' holy sacrifice was offered once for all upon the Cross, we were set free from the sin. Battle is still hard, but this assurance must comfort us with great confidence.

“Look toward me, and have pity on me, O Lord, for I am alone and afflicted. Put an end to my affliction and my suffering, and take away all my sins, O my God. To You, I lift up my soul, O Lord. In You, O my God, I trust; let me not be put to shame.”⁴

We are aware of our sins and iniquities, of our great weakness, but let's not give up to self-pity and despair. We know that we love the Lord and He loves us more that we can even imagine. That why we can come to Him, ashamed, but confident in his merciful forgiveness, that our iniquities can be taken away from us, providing our promise to remain faithful and humbled.⁵

Sometimes, we may feel a bit lost or abandoned by God, but the Lord expressed in the Gospel the borders of His care for us: there is none! The only reason which could make Him angry at us would be our perseverance in our infidelity. But if we come regularly to humbly beg for his forgiveness, he will see our true desire to sincerely follow Him.

“I say to you: there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”⁶

“The last word of the Gospel. A marvellous word that opens before us the horizons of heavenly joys, and allows us to perceive a part of the angelic joy that the acts of repentance of our poor souls is giving to them. Jesus says these words at the moment of communion, as to alleviate the pain that might arise in us, as we rest on him in the warmth of the fold, if we were to remember the lost, stubborn, lazy or elusive sheep that we once were.”⁷

Let's come to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and ask of Him this true virtue of humility, the same He's showing us every day, hiding His Majesty under the humble veil of the Blessed Sacrament.

“That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”⁸

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

⁴ Ps. XXIV, 16, 18 & 1-2. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost, Introit.

⁵ Dom Ludovic Baron, L'expression du Chant Grégorien, Sunday within the Octave of the Sacred Heart.

⁶ Luke, XV, 10. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost, Communion.

⁷ Dom Ludovic Baron, L'expression du Chant Grégorien, Sunday within the Octave of the Sacred Heart. Translated with www.deepl.com.

⁸ Cardinal Merry del Val, Litany of Humility.