

Birkenhead, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

“To You, O Lord, I call; O my God, be not deaf to me; depart not from me<sup>1</sup>.”

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

Easter and the mystery of the resurrection seem a bit far away, and our Mother and Teacher the Church desires that we do not forget about it in the middle of the summer, when our devotion might be weakened a little bit, because of warmth, periodical sloth, or several other reasons, that we might find to justify ourselves before us, or even before the Lord.

Therefore, the Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians is offered to our meditation for this 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost:

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, and after that to the Eleven. Then He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at one time, many of whom are with us still, but some have fallen asleep<sup>2</sup>.”

Hear the last words: “fallen asleep”. In true honesty, and in the secret of your heart, try to answer the question of the Lord to you this morning. Did you fall away from Him? Did you neglect the duty towards Him? Did you miss any engagement you took towards Him?

The words of the Apostle should wake you up, as thunder is awaking us in the middle of the night, frightened and scared, because of the lukewarmness of our heart. Humility and contrition are the attitude to choose in such a situation. Even if we were justified by the Sacrament of Baptism, we do realise that so much is still left to be done to achieve salvation.

“Last Sunday, the Publican reminded us of the Humility which should exist in the sinner: today, the Doctor of the Gentiles shows us, by his own example, that this virtue is quite as suitable to a man, who, though now justified, never forgets how, in the past, he offended his Maker<sup>3</sup>.”

You would say: Humility again. And you would be right, but this tiny virtue is so difficult to obtain, and so necessary to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, that we could talk about it all along the Liturgical Year, and yet, it would not be enough to truly obtain it.

Enter again in the secrecy of your heart and see your weaknesses. Then, present them to the King of Kings, like the deaf and dumb of the Gospel: with humility and simplicity.

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<sup>1</sup> Ps., 27, 1. Gradual.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor., 15, 3-6, 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Epistle.

<sup>3</sup> Dom Guéranger, *Liturgical Year*, 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost.

“Do not be astonished or discouraged at the sight of your imperfections; not being wilful, they draw down the compassion and mercy of our God Who is touched by the weakness of His children<sup>4</sup>”

But how should we display these weaknesses before our Creator, who already knows everything about us?

“To know how to display our miseries before God is to draw down grace; never forget that. If a soul, even one far advanced in virtue, ceased to regard her own miseries and to take complacency in the gifts she has received, she would infallibly fall. For you, my dear child, learn to say with St. Paul “Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me<sup>5</sup>”<sup>6</sup>”

Come again, one more time, at the throne of God. He is here, expecting you. Kneel before Him, tell Him in simplicity all your failures, and cry that you need His help.

“Do not let yourself be discouraged by your miseries; the Good God leaves you some miseries to convince you thoroughly that you can do nothing. He does not wish us to be able to attribute to ourselves whatever good we may accomplish. Jesus is our holiness; we must be very faithful and wait for Him to act in us<sup>7</sup>.”

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

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<sup>4</sup> Dom Marmion, *Union with God*, IV, 2 - Hope.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor., 12, 9.

<sup>6</sup> Dom Marmion, *Union with God*, IV, 2 - Hope.

<sup>7</sup> Dom Marmion, *Union with God*, IV, 2 - Hope.