

Preston, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025

## Quinquagesima

“If I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal<sup>1</sup>.”

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

Sunday of Quinquagesima presents us with the well-known hymn to Charity from the Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians. When he wrote them this letter, before the feast of Pentecost of year 55 or 54, St Paul reminded them that to become true Christians, they would have to look like Christ crucified; they would have to live through Him and in Him. After long developments against divisions and defects, the apostle of the Gentiles wrote some of the most beautiful verses of the Bible, praising the eminency of the virtue of Charity before any others.

“If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I have prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, yet do not have charity, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, yet do not have charity, it profits me nothing<sup>2</sup>.”

Charity cannot be missing in the heart of a true catholic.

“The Apostle says: without charity nothing is enough; but charity alone is enough for everything, for it contains and encloses every virtue: it presupposes above all the set of virtues which [we] lack most, and which [are] described in detail [in the continuation of today’s epistle]. Following Saint Paul’s advice, all we need to do is to establish ourselves in the order of charity; and to be able to advance in each virtue, it is less certain to exercise the acts of this virtue than to produce acts of charity<sup>3</sup>.”

But, you would be right to tell me off and say: how, where, from whom should we learn such practice of this divine virtue? The answer is found in the liturgy again, and especially during these coming days. For three days, here, in this Shrine Church of St Walburge, erected to be a special place in the diocese of Lancaster where the Blessed Sacrament is venerated and adored, you will have a unique opportunity to come and resource yourselves. You will learn from the Divine Master Himself what are the keys and secrets of this beautiful virtue which transforms all your good actions in a token of your eternal rewards.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor., 13. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> Dom Paul Delatte, *Les Épitres de Saint Paul, replacés dans le milieu historique des Actes des Apôtres*, Vol 1, 1<sup>ère</sup> aux Corinthiens, Ch. XIII, La Charité. Translation with [www.deepl.com](http://www.deepl.com).

God is Charity. From the Son, who gave his divine life for our sins as the greatest evidence of his Love for us, we may learn and received this inestimable gift. As another mark of this immense love, he left us the Blessed Sacrament, His real presence, the renewal of His Sacrifice upon the Cross, the testimony of our redemption. How could we remain insensible before such a gift? How could we not answer to this call of Love, while He would expose Himself to our veneration? How could we deny Him a few minutes, hours of our time in these next forty hours, when we could receive so many graces and increase so much in our life with Him?

Nothing should be more important than this adoration in this next three days! The sheets which are at the back of the church to ensure the continuous watch are to be filled with all your names today! Waste a bit of your time in coming and adore! Following the demonic views of the outer world, it will look wasted. As we know, it will not, as you would build yourselves a treasure in heaven, Charity and Love of God, where no thief would come and take it of you.

To help you to discover and love more the Holy Eucharist, Canon Cristofoli presented us these past Sundays with a few eucharistic miracles from these last fifty years. It seems possible that another one happened a few days ago in America. This, of course, is still under investigation by the Church, but the news reported that a consecrated host which had been dropped during a daily Mass, was placed in water in the tabernacle to dissolve, following the Church's guidelines to maintain the sanctity of the Holy Eucharist. Spots of blood were discovered on the hosts while preparing for a Mass a few days later. The investigation is still occurring, but if that was a new eucharistic miracle to be recognized, what an event to stress our devotion towards the Blessed Sacrament!

To push you towards Him in a more pressing way, the liturgy of today's mass concludes with an invitation from the psalms:

“They ate and were wholly surfeited; the Lord had brought them what they craved: they were not defrauded of that which they craved<sup>4</sup>.”

Come and receive him in the Holy Communion, after a necessary confession if needed! Come and adore Him in the Monstrance, solemnly exposed! Give Him a bit of your time. Men and things will deceive you, Jesus remains forever faithful to His Divine Word! He never deceives!

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

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<sup>4</sup> Ps., 77, 29-30. Communion Antiphon.