

## HOMILY ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF YEAR (B)

### COMPLEMENTARY OPPOSITES

God created everything in its opposites: Male and female; young and old; short and tall/long; beautiful and ugly; joy and sorrow; light and darkness; life and death; happiness and sadness; etc. These opposites complement each other. Our life also is made up of these opposites. There is always the odd and even pages in our daily lives. The odd pages complement the even pages and vice versa. Easter Sunday is always preceded by the Good Friday. Neither the odd nor the even page is completely negative, on the contrary, they both complement one another. In each of these situations, God speaks to us but unfortunately, only the few wise can read clearly, the handwriting on the wall. On few are wise enough to listen and be able to read meaning into every event of life.

Solomon says that when we find ourselves in the even page of our lives we rarely, if ever, remember the odd page and vice versa. "In prosperity", he says, "nobody remembers adversity and in the time of adversity prosperity is forgotten"(Sirach 11:25-27). It take the wise to know that both of them come from the Lord. Both times are times to pray. In prosperity, good health, fecundity, longevity etc. we thank God for His benevolence, while acknowledging, in humility, our unworthiness. In the time of adversity, sorrow, sickness, dryness, sterility etc. we acknowledge that given our numerous sins, we deserve them and even more, yet we pray and beg for God's mercy and assistance.

That all seems to be well with you is not a guaranty that tomorrow will continue to be the same. When you are in your even page always anticipate the imminent arrival of the odd page. This is a sign that here is not our permanent home. We are on transit. Everything is on transit as Heraclitus, a philosopher, said that only change that permanent. No matter the sorrow you are going through today, the Lord will soon visit you with consolation and gladden your heart. In time of God visitations you do not have to mock others whose are in agony since you may suddenly be invaded by sorrow and difficulties of any sort. Sometimes, like Job, you may find yourself in a restless condition when you neither find respite in the day nor the night. It is sorrow all the way. It calls for confidence in the Lord who is

always a mighty healer and who can never abandon His own. It may not be long before He comes to rescue you.

What you are going through now no matter how negative it may appear may be for the glorification of the name of God. When the disciples of Christ asked Him whether it was as the result of the sin of the man born blind or that of his parents that made him to find himself in that condition, our Lord said that it was neither the man's sins nor that of his parents that made him to be born blind, rather that he was born blind so that His (Christ's) work may be made manifest in him. God often if not always allows those things to befall us so that we can look up to heaven and seek help from Him. He also uses it to show us that nothing is trustworthy here on earth as nothing endures which cannot perish within a twinkling of an eye.

In the gospel Christ shows the need to pray not only for ourselves but also for others. "Anyone who is too busy that he has no time to pray", says St. Augustine, "is busier than God wants him to be". In the beginning of today's gospel, we see the disciples prayed for Simon Peter's mother-in-law by telling the Lord she is sick and Christ acted promptly. Many people are held bound by the devil, we discover them because God wants us to do something. On our own we may not be able to unbind them but we can petition the Lord on their behalf help them come out of their difficulties, through prayers. That is all that the Lord requires from us and sometimes visit and assist them in their sick bed or even help to pay their hospital bill if we can afford it or buy the prescribed drugs.

We should make a daily programme for our family prayers: days to pray for different intentions and different people and the type of prayers to be offered. (Above every other form of prayer, I recommend here, after the daily mass, the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary in your families. There is nothing we may ask through the rosary that will not be granted us unless in His infinite wisdom, God sees that such will be very harmful to us in which case He will give the grace to accept the situation calmly). Nothing should keep us so busy as to prevent us from praying. With prayer we come closer to God and rediscover His will in our lives and His plans and purposes for us. Being here on errand by God, we should be in constant communications with God who sent us so as not to make imputable and dangerous mistakes. Our actions become more perfect, more acceptable, safer, and more efficacious if it is done through Mary, with Mary, in Mary and for Mary.

We should seek the face of God in both time of prosperity and in time of adversity. This is the only way to express our faith and love for Him. Our love, our faith and confidence in God is nurtured through prayer. Every saint prayed. There is no saint who does not pray. When the same thing happen to two people, one who prays and another who doesn't, their reactions or responses will differ greatly. The one who prays, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, will always ponder everything calmly in his heart in prayer trying to discover what God is saying through that situation or event. He is sure that God has a reason for allowing it to happen. It is not the same with the one who does not pray. On the contrary, he blames everybody for it, regret everything, he is jittery and complains every moment; asking such question as, why me? What have done? Where is God? I don't deserve all these punishment. Am I the worst sinner? Etc.

We are the saints in making and should think and act like our past heros who have gone before us.