

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 15, 2018

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: IS 1:10-17, PS 50, MT 10:34-11:1

TUESDAY: IS 7:1-9, PS 48, MT 11:20-24

WEDNESDAY: IS 10:5-7, 13B-16, PS 94, MT 11:25-27

THURSDAY: IIS 26:7-9, 12, 16-19, PS 102, MT 11:28-30

FRIDAY: IS 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8, IS 38, MT 12:1-8

SATURDAY: MI 2:1-5, PS 10, MT 12:14-21

NEXT SUNDAY: SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – RDGS: JER 23:1-6, PS 23, EPH 2:13-18, MK 6:30-34

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: WENDY GAVIN

TUESDAY: FR. MICHAEL ONDO

WEDNESDAY: FR. JOSEPH GRACE

THURSDAY: FR. COLUMBA KELLY, OSB

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: ELDA MILLER

7:30: FOR THE PARISH

10:00: LAURA HARDEN

NOON: PATTI RIEHLE

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

For deceased priests and religious & for the Poor Souls:

Charles Clapp families, Jane Clapp). Carl & Scott Waclawik. Bob Bohan. Farrell & LaGuire families. Dorothy Nelson. Marian Schwartz. (Burnell, Anna & Henry Totten, Robert Stump, Victor & Dorothy Ringle). (Mary Salrin, Judy & Ed Buckles). Deceased members of the Schlosser & Kanthack families. (Laurette Heady, Stephanie, John & Tim Fitzgerald). (Bob Bennett & Luke Spitznagle).



So they went off and preached repentance.

What preceded this statement may be a clue as to precisely how “well received” they were. In other words, they were preaching “change”. Jesus himself knew how this message was received by way of the many obstacles which were placed in his path as he preached, e.g. “where are you from”? “by what authority do you say these things”? “who do you think you are”? These and many other questions greeted him as he attempted to indicate that change is the prerequisite for welcoming the Kingdom of Heaven. Our hearts are big enough to accommodate the mercy and love associated with the Kingdom but they will not long endure if they are divided between the Kingdom and a host of other things vying for attention. In short if we wish to enter the Kingdom we must first repent and present hearts ready to receive the magnitude of that Kingdom in all its many forms. These forms involve being peacemakers, pure in heart, merciful, eager to work for justice and righteousness and so on (Matthew 5). For hearts to contain such a wealth of eternal treasure they must be free of the clutter that keeps us from seeking first that Kingdom and its righteousness (Mt. 6:33). And, as everybody knows, change of heart is not a welcome message for it implies, in many instances, a radical change in our behavior, behavior which is so fixed over the years that we find it impossible to know where to begin. And that is where prayer, fasting and works of mercy enter the picture. Once the desire to change is there, and initially all we can expect is a desire, then we can begin to cooperate with grace and engage in on-going prayer to discern the direction of our “change process”. We will come face to face with the many things which attempt to block this avenue of instruction and keep us from changing. We must persevere. Fasting allows us to recognize what has been in the way of our changing and a concerted effort to remove it by way of the Fruits and Gifts of the Holy Spirit as well as the Virtues. And works of mercy allows us to hone our focus on the Kingdom and move away from focusing on ourselves. In short the road to the Kingdom is exactly as Jesus described it, “narrow” but with his constant presence we will make the journey successfully.

SHOWING TRUE REPENTANCE

BY Fr. Nnamdi Moneme, OMV

In her memoirs, 85-year-old Filipina Sister Maria Carmela tells a thought-provoking story of her missionary experience in Africa. She narrates that in her religious community, during night prayer or Compline, the sisters used to ask each other for pardon in reparations for any hurts that they may have inflicted on others during the day. But the African sisters who hosted her never made reparations or said they were sorry for the hurt they obviously caused others during the day. She eventually asked one of the African sisters why they never said “I am sorry” to others during the night prayer as all their fellow religious sisters around the world used to do. She received the reply, “‘I am sorry’ just does not exist in our vocabulary. We show we are sorry in another way.” It was then that Sr. Carmela noticed that they never said, “I am sorry” only because they preferred to show their repentance and make reparations by deeds, rather than by words. She then recalled how when a fellow sister hurt her, she would later find her shoes shined, her clothes washed or a glass of cold water placed on her table during meals. For the African sisters, it was not enough to say, “I am sorry”; they showed they were sorry by the things that they did, by their loving deeds.

In the gospel, John the Baptist says, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” He calls his audience to urgent repentance not just because the present world is coming to an end but because they are now part of a new reality – the kingdom of heaven. This new reality, a communion between God and His people, calls for a new type of being and acting such that words alone are not enough. Like everyone else, many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to the Jordan River to “acknowledge their sins.” Though they wanted to receive John’s baptism of repentance, many of the Pharisees and Sadducees had no intention of showing the fruits of true repentance by their subsequent actions. The Pharisees filled with the self-righteousness and the Sadducees who saw this present life as the only life that existed could not perceive the urgent call to a new life that the kingdom of heaven demanded.

This attitude of the Pharisees and Sadducees caused the Baptist to call them “Brood of vipers” and to sternly exhort them to “Produce good fruit as evidence of their repentance.” Mere verbal acknowledgement of sin is not enough; they must show their repentance by the things that they do if they hoped to be part of the new reality of God’s kingdom. If all they do is acknowledge their sins without showing it in loving deeds, like the tree without good fruits, they too will be “cut down and thrown into the fire” and will have no part in the kingdom of heaven. Sadly, many of them chose to retain and nurture their venoms until they vented their anger on Jesus Christ too.

The Roman community is divided between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. St. Paul reminds the Christians that true Christians must be agents of unity because of the new reality of the kingdom of heaven to which they now belong.

Because they are now children of the kingdom, forgiven by God and living in peace with God (Rom 5:1), Christians show that they have truly repented when they “Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed them, for the glory of God.” They should reflect to others this unconditional acceptance that they had received from Jesus Christ. The Christians’ hospitality to others and their living in peace with all are the only acceptable proofs of true repentance.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, we are now children of the eternal kingdom. We have been forgiven by God in Christ Jesus. Forgiveness for sin is always accompanied by the specific grace to move us to show we are truly sorry by freely and lovingly performing charitable deeds. We must concur with God’s forgiveness not only by our words of sorrow but by our actions of love for God and neighbor. As members of God’s kingdom, it is never enough to merely say to God, “I am sorry” or “Forgive me.” He surely forgives us but also pours His grace into our hearts, whispering, “Show me that you are sorry.” He does this when we pray the Confiteor at the beginning of Mass. In this prayer, God forgives us for our venial sins, gives us grace to show true repentance for these sins and then whispers to our hearts, “Show me that you are sorry.”

In the sacraments of confession, we acknowledge and confess our sins to Jesus in the person of the priest. We receive forgiveness and divine guarantee of forgiveness from the lips of the priest, the specific grace to show true repentance in what we do, as well as the divine exhortation, “Show me that you are sorry.” God is not satisfied with our merely confessing or acknowledging our sins. How different and more life-giving our Masses and Confessions will be if we receive these sacraments always thinking of one concrete way in which we can show God that we are truly sorry for our sins. It may be a concrete way of avoiding such sins in the future, or something done or endured out of love for God and neighbor, or a new attitude to life. Or it may just be refusing to give up in the struggle with sin out of love for God.

What do we get when we move from merely saying to God, “I am sorry” to actually showing Him that we are truly sorry for our sins? One sure reward is that we find great peace and we become instruments of peace to others in the world. The Prophet Isaiah speaks of the coming of the messiah as a descendant of David. The messiah will bring a peace that would extend to the animal kingdom and to all the cosmos.

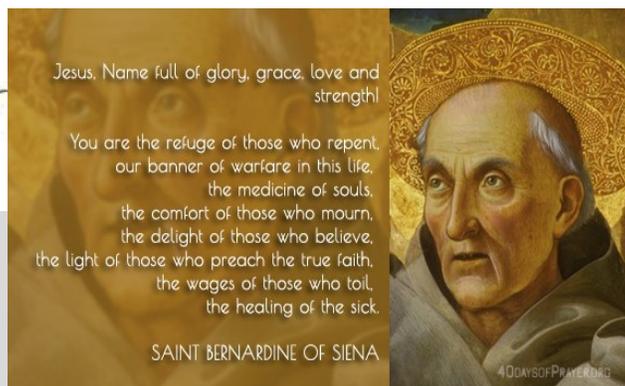
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“There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain.” Is this type of peace possible or is the Prophet dreaming? Truly this peace is possible because Jesus is with us here and now in the Eucharist we celebrate and “the Spirit of the Lord rests upon Him.” By this Spirit, we are forgiven, reconciled with God, and given access to this peace of Christ. By this Spirit, we are brought into His kingdom even now and moved to bear good fruits in loving deeds to show our true repentance. The peace that extends to all creation is the peace that comes from God to creation through truly repentant hearts. Peace in our world depends on how authentic our repentance is. We become those graced channels of peace to our world only when we realize that we now belong to the new reality of God’s kingdom and choose to move beyond merely saying to God, “God, I am sorry” to actually showing that we are sorry by the lives that we live today.

By Fr. Nnamdi Moneme, OMV

Fr. Nnamdi Moneme OMV is a Roman Catholic Priest of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary currently on missionary assignment in the Philippines. He serves in the Congregations' Retreat Ministry and in the House of Formation for novices and theologians in Antipolo, Philippines. He blogs



“David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ Then Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord, for his part, forgives your sin; you are not to die.’”

David, King of Israel, was remembered for his mighty deeds. As God’s anointed he had secured the future of Israel’s scattered tribes. He was also remembered for his sin. Despite the many favours that he had received from the Lord, he had blatantly disregarded God’s law by murdering the innocent Uriah and taking his wife to himself.

Perhaps to a lesser extent we are all like David. In many ways we remain faithful to God’s will, but in hidden ways we surrender to a self-will that has the power to master us. David was also remembered for his repentance. When confronted by the prophet Nathan, David immediately confessed his sin, thereby placing himself in the hands of God’s mercy. He did more than admit his failing, he prayed for the mercy that would bring about a change of heart: “A new heart create for me, O Lord. Put your Spirit within me.”

Humble repentance, in the words of St Paul, invites a divine mercy that transforms us into the likeness of the Lord. “I have been crucified with Christ, and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and sacrificed himself for my sake.”

We see this change of heart in the woman of bad name who attended Jesus at the banquet of the Pharisees. While the Pharisees conspired against Jesus, this woman knelt at his feet, anointing them with oil. Jesus had clearly encountered this woman and forgiven her sins. This subsequent encounter demonstrated the transformative power of his mercy. “You see this woman? I came into your house, and you poured no water over my feet. You gave me no kiss, but she has been covering my feet with kisses. For this reason I tell you that her sins, her many sins, must have been forgiven her, otherwise she would not have shown such great love.”

We are all sinners. During this Year of Mercy let us remember that true repentance bears fruit not only in sorrow, but also in an increased love for God and neighbour.

Confession Must be Humble, Complete and Accompanied by Firm Purpose of Amendment

1. On previous occasions I have developed the theme of the sacrament of Penance from various angles, illustrating the functions of the confessor from the doctrinal, ascetical and psychological standpoint so that he will fulfil this loftiest task of his as perfectly as possible.

2. Now I would like to give explicit but certainly not exhaustive, consideration to some aspects concerning the person who is the beneficiary of the sacred rite of Penance: in sacramental confession, he can and must renew, strengthen and direct his Christian life to holiness, that is, to the life of supernatural charity which is obtained and practiced in the Church towards God, our Father, and towards men and women, our brothers and sisters.

In the sacrament of Penance, the sacrament of confession and reconciliation, every soul relives as its personal history the Gospel account of the tax collector, who left the temple justified: "But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled but he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk 18:13-14).

To acknowledge one's misery in the sight of God is not to abase oneself, but to live the truth of one's own condition and thus to obtain the true greatness of justice and grace after falling into sin, the effect of malice and weakness; it is to rise to the loftiest peace of spirit, by entering into a living relationship with God who is merciful and faithful. The truth thus lived is the only thing in the human condition that truly makes us free: this is attested by the word of God (Jn 8:31-34), which, in regard to our moral condition, explains the light brought to man by the Eternal Word in the "kairos" of the fullness of time.

3. The truth, which comes from the Word and must lead us to him, explains why sacramental confession must not stem from and be accompanied by a mere psychological impulse, as though the sacrament were a substitute for psychotherapy, but from sorrow based on supernatural motives, because sin violates charity towards God, the Supreme Good, was the reason for the Redeemer's sufferings and causes us to lose the goods of eternity.

Confession of sins must be humble and complete

From this standpoint one can clearly see how confession must be humble complete, accompanied by a firm, generous purpose of amendment for the future and lastly by the trust that this same amendment will be achieved.

As for humility, it is obvious that without it the accusation of one's sins would be a useless list or, worse, an arrogant assertion of the right to commit them: the "Non serviam" by which the rebellious angels fell and the first man and his descendants were lost. Humility is really identified with detesting evil: "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless in your judgement" (Ps 51 [50]:5-6).

4. Confession must also be complete in the sense that one must tell "all mortal sins", as was expressly stated in the 14th session, fifth chapter, of the Council of Trent, which explains this necessity not in terms of a simple disciplinary norm of the Church, but as a requirement of divine law, because the Lord established it so in the very institution of the sacrament: "From the institution of the sacrament of Penance ... the universal Church has always understood that there was also instituted by the Lord the complete confession of sins and this is necessary by divine law for all who have fallen after Baptism. For our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left priests as his own vicars, as overseers and judges, to whom all mortal sins into which Christ's faithful might have fallen were to be referred..." (Denzinger-Schonmetzer, 1679).

5. Partly because of the mistaken reduction of moral value to the so-called "fundamental option" alone, partly because of the equally mistaken reduction of the content of the moral law solely to the precept of charity, often vaguely understood with the exclusion of other sins, and partly and perhaps this is the most widespread reason for such behaviour because of an arbitrary, reductive interpretation of the "freedom of the children of God", claimed as a private, confidential relationship prescinding from the Church's mediation, unfortunately many of the faithful today approach the sacrament of Penance without making a complete accusation of their mortal sins in the sense just mentioned by the Council of Trent. Sometimes they react to the priest confessor, who dutifully questions them about the necessary completeness, as if he were allowing himself an undue intrusion into the sanctuary of conscience. I hope and pray that these unenlightened faithful will be convinced, also by virtue of this present teaching, that the norm requiring completeness in kind and number, insofar as can be known from an honestly examined memory, is not a burden imposed on them arbitrarily, but a means of liberation and serenity.

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No repentance without purpose of amendment

It is also self-evident that the accusation of sins must include the serious intention not to commit them again in the future. If this disposition of soul is lacking, there really is no repentance: this is in fact a question of moral evil as such, and so not taking a stance opposed to a possible moral evil would mean not detesting evil, not repenting. But as this must stem above all from sorrow for having offended God, so the intention of not sinning must be based on divine grace, which the Lord never fails to give anyone who does what he can to act honestly.

If we wished to rely only on our own strength, or primarily on our own strength, the decision to sin no more, with a presumed self-sufficiency, almost a Christian Stoicism or revived Pelagianism, we would offend against that truth about man with which we began, as though we were to tell the Lord, more or less consciously, that we did not need him. It should also be remembered that the existence of sincere repentance is one thing, the judgement of the intellect concerning the future is another: it is indeed possible that, despite the sincere intention of sinning no more, past experience and the awareness of human weakness makes one afraid of falling again; but this does not compromise the authenticity of the intention, when that fear is joined to the will, supported by prayer, of doing what is possible to avoid sin.

6. And here we should again consider the trust which should accompany the detestation of sin, the humble accusation of it and the firm will to sin no more. Trust is the possible and necessary exercise of supernatural Hope, by which we expect from God's Goodness, through his promises and through the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour, eternal life and the graces necessary to attain it. It is also an act of that esteem we owe ourselves as creatures of God, who has already ennobled us by nature above all material creation, elevated us to Grace and mercifully redeemed us; it is an incentive to commit ourselves with all our strength, wherever lack of trust is scepticism and paralyzing frigidity.

In this regard, the Gospel offers us critically valuable teaching about the final tragedy of Judas' betrayal and Peter's saving reparation. Judas repented. The Gospel is explicit in this regard "When Judas, his betrayer, saw that he was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood'" (Mt 27:3-4). However, he did not connect this repentance with the word Jesus spoke to him precisely while Judas was betraying him: "Friend" (Mt 26:48); he did not have trust and took his own life. Peter fell, indeed three times, with almost equal gravity, but he trusted and, having made his threefold reparation through love after Easter was confirmed by Christ in his ministry. St John wonderfully gives us the reason, the strength and sweetness of our hopes: "So we know and believe the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him" (1 Jn 4:16).

7. As I address those attending the course, I am thinking of all the priests of the world. The reflections I have just given are dedicated to the ministry of all us priests, so that we will not only be generously ready to hear the sacramental confessions of the faithful, but will continually, in liturgical homilies, catechesis, spiritual direction and every possible form our ministry to the truth may take, train them to benefit with better dispositions from this great gift of God's mercy, which is the sacrament of Penance. We ask the Lord for this same grace for ourselves, who, as brothers among brothers, must amend ourselves from sin so as to grow in holiness, by using that same sacrament as penitents.

In entrusting to the Blessed Virgin's motherly intercession the future ministry of the young men who have so diligently taken part in this course, I invoke upon everyone the favours of the divine kindness, as a pledge of which I affectionately send a special Apostolic Blessing.

*Look
me, good
Jesus
while be-
fore I
kneel
with
soul,
pray and
to fix
heart*



*down upon
and gentle*

*fore Your
humbly
and,
burning*

*beseech You
deep in my
lively senti-*

ments

*of faith, hope, and charity;
true contrition for my sins,
and a firm purpose of amendment.*

*While I contemplate,
with great love and tender pity,
Your five most precious wounds,
pondering over them within me
and calling to mind the words which
David,*

*Your prophet, said to You, my Jesus:
"They have pierced My hands and My
feet,
they have numbered all My bones."*

Amen.

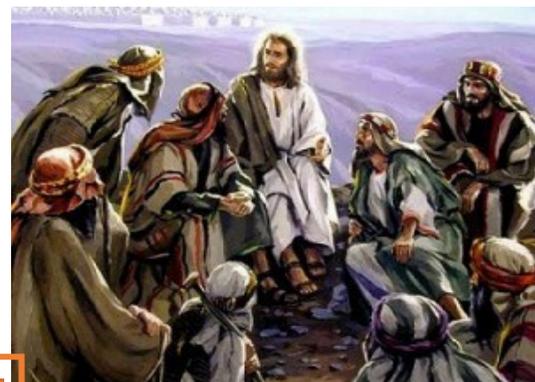
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Announcements and Upcoming Events



Schoenstatt Holy Hour

All are invited to the *Schoenstatt Holy Hour* with **Father Cassian Sama O.P** On Tuesday, July 17, 2018 at 7pm in St Thomas Aquinas Church. It will include adoration, rosary, a homily, and benediction.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF STs JOACHIM & ANN JULY 21-29

EVENTS INCLUDE: KICKOFF WITH PARISH BREAKFAST SUNDAY, JULY 22nd 8:30-11:30

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY: EVENING DEVOTIONS BEGINNING AT 5: 00 P.M.

5:00 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT (CONFESSION AVAILABLE UNTIL 5:30)

5:30 EVENSONG WITH BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT CONCLUDING WITH THE VENERATION OF THE RELIC OF ST. ANN

**THURSDAY, JULY 26 AT 6:00 P.M. NOVENA ORGAN CONCERT FEATURING DAVID JARONOWSKI
SATURDAY, JULY 28-PARISH PICNIC AFTER THE 4:30 MASS.**

“He instructed them to take nothing for the journey.” When Jesus sent his Apostles out, He sent them “two by two,” and He basically commanded them to take nothing on the journey: “no food, no sack, no money in their belts.” The point of the Lord is that all they needed was to trust in God. Jesus more or less says the same thing to us.

As long as we trust in God, our needs will be met. That is easily said, but it is a bit daunting to actually do it. Yet, people have been doing that since Jesus’ time. It is one of the reasons that the Church has thrived for such a long time.

There is a secondary reason for Jesus’ instructions though, one with which we may not be familiar. At that time there was a ruled that you could not enter a temple area with shoes or a moneybag, because you were there to serve the Lord, nothing else and no one else. The Apostles understood that preaching the Gospel and healing in God’s name was holy work. Jesus did not want them to exemplify any other motive either.

One of the foundational elements of stewardship is trusting God. What enables us to be good stewards and to think of giving to God first, of ourselves and what we have, is that we truly believe that God will take care of us. God has a plan for each of us, and it is better than

SUNDAY OFFERING: \$8073

SUMMER MISSION APPEAL:\$5660

“FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS”

ST. AUGUSTINE