



Saturday 16 Oct 2021

Saturday of the twenty-eighth week in Ordinary Time Year 1

Gospel

Lk 12:8-12

A reading from holy Gospel according to Luke

When the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you, if anyone openly declares himself for me in the presence of men, the Son of Man will declare himself for him in the presence of God's angels. But the man who disowns me in the presence of men will be disowned in the presence of God's angels.

'Everyone who says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

'When they take you before synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how to defend yourselves or what to say, because when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say.'

Fr Graham Fullick

Homily Lk 12:9-12 Acknowledging God; Blaspheming Holy Spirit

It is a peculiarly English Biblical or Liturgical (Our Lady's Ordinariate of the Southern Cross) rendering when we are enjoined or pray to "be of stout heart". Perhaps it reminds you (it does me!) of a barrel-chested P.E. teacher, or of a rotund Father Christmas with a Santa sack like a cornucopia of plenty, or of the portly, avuncular yet solid Pope St. John XXIII. It even makes me think of an old television commercial for *Dine* cat food: "Dine beef and heart is all beef and heart". If you are a dog person, how about the old pet food commercial for *Chum* where the little Scotch terrier says "Chum is so chumpy you can carve it". If you really want an image of being barrel-chestedly stout hearted, think of the Yeomen of the Guard "Beefeaters" of the Tower of London. Sir Winston Churchill?

What is conveyed is a consistency between the outside look and the inside substance; solid to the core. Beyond that, by stout hearted person we mean a person who lives with conviction yes, but also magnanimity so that the wild misfortunes and arrows of this world do not phase them. They have a higher purpose as they wait "in joyful hope for the coming of [their] Saviour, Jesus Christ" and live to-day, here now, as if life has eternal meaning and

matters—and it does! Christ and only Christ integrates our humanity with His divinity in His own being and also in the fruits of His Resurrection and Ascension given to us in the Holy Spirit with knowledge, wisdom, fear of the Lord, good counsel, fortitude, piety and understanding.

In this part of St. Luke's Gospel, Jesus has turned Himself resolutely towards Jerusalem. He knows that He will suffer grievously and be put to death, yet He is of stout heart and continues. We cannot have fortitude by ourselves because we are mortal. We die. We do not have personal strength to hold our souls in being when tempted or dejected, let alone our physical selves. God gives us that strength and God alone. Therefore if we acknowledge that "our help is in the Lord who made Heaven and earth" and us here on earth, then the Lord will "make haste and help us". Now, like Christ in His humanity we will suffer for our Christianity before fallen governors like Pontius Pilate who did not know what truth was, yet we who acknowledge before men and live the Eternal Truth of God will be acknowledged by the Lord in Eternity. Our lived faith may lead to our torture and the death of our bodies, but we fear rather the devil who can destroy our soul and the soul of this world. The devil is rightly called by Jesus the prince of this world. Jesus is the King of the world and creator of the universe. We justly fear the judgment of the Lord, but the Lord is a perfectly just judge. To a God-fearing and Godly living person of faith to believe in God, hope to trust in God's mercy and charity to love as God loves, there is no false fear of the travails of this world.

If we live our lives with shallow hearts, having received the Revelation of God's Holy Spirit in our bones in Baptism and the Living Life of Son and Father in the Blessed Sacrament, yet living against Life itself, then we will not be fit to receive the mercy of God, the eternal Redemption of our souls. St. John Chrysostom says that the Lord is not content with an inward faith but requires an outward confession of it. If we live in faith our actions will be truly good. Jesus had an undivided heart, a Sacred Heart of perfect faith hope and charity who could conceive no wrong and do no wrong. He is righteous living Himself in human vesture and action. St. Augustine says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is impenitence against the forgiveness offered by the Holy Spirit. This is a clog on the equity of the Lord's Redemption won for us. St. Athanasius and St. Ambrose speak of the sin against the Holy Spirit as a resolute refusal to see, acknowledge or do the Good of God, to impute the perfect Goodness done through God to Beelzebub, the spirit of the evil of this world.

"A pure heart create for me O God; put a steadfast spirit within me." (Ps. 51:10) Do not be afraid of human institutions even if they punish you on account of your Godly witness of faith or impute un-Godly motives to pure acts of love. If the love of God is the beginning and endurance of those acts of love, then God will acknowledge you and be your Beatific Vision in Heaven.

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