



Tuesday 12 Oct 2021

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

Gospel

Lk 11:37-41

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Give alms and everything will be made clean for me.

Jesus had just finished speaking when a Pharisee invited him to dine at his house. He went in and sat down at the table. The Pharisee saw this and was surprised that he had not first washed before the meal. But the Lord said to him, 'Oh, you Pharisees! You clean the outside of cup and plate, while inside yourselves you are filled with extortion and wickedness. Fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside too? Instead, give alms from what you have and then indeed everything will be clean for you.'

Homily Lk 11 37 41 – Fr Graham Fullick

This Pharisee (myself/us/we) have a vocation to holiness, i.e. becoming holy, sanctification in daily life. Jesus is Holy already, “the fountain of Holiness” for God is Holiness Himself: inexhaustible and overflowing. Jesus didn't have to wash because he was clean already. That is the Revelation of God. Better still, He let water and blood flow from His pierced side for our washing clean. Like me, do you as a Christian reach point (perhaps frequently after reflection!) where intellectually you know you should start on the deeper path? At some point you have to make a radical decision in your bones that is only possible with total docility and submission to Jesus. If you are like me, however slow the lead-up was to that point, *at* that point you *know* when you make that submission of faith. At some point we trust in God and not our externals, and ask and allow the Lord to wash us clean inside.

Indeed, we dare continually as members of His Church to place our feet under His Altar and dine with Him. To receive the Lord, really we empty ourselves of our lesser, fallen selves and ask humbly to be fed by the Lord in Holy Spirit and Eternal Truth. You are acceptable to God, however unworthy. The heart knows at the level of being what the intellect suggests. Our witness of faith reaches a new level. More particularly our commitment becomes more genuine because of the assent of intellect and spiritual will. Intellect and faith match and are synchronised.

We are to rise up more steps for the new journey has just begun. It begins every day with a morning offering of prayer or—better—begins the night before with an examination of conscience and a relection on the good, bad, ugly and beautiful and how we can be more pleasing as a member of the Church to Jesus our Bridegroom.

Metaphorically, like a car, we are at the bottom of the Mattara Hillclimb on the flat of King Edward Park in second gear with six gears to go. The *metanoia*, repenting of sin and turning to God is constant, not just one gear change. We have to drop a gear frequently, turn the wheel of our will frequently and get sideways and our inadequacy can be frightening. That inadequacy is our sin in all its forms, even while entered in this race called life: The time God gives us to be virtuous lovers of Him and neighbour. We are not holy yet, for we are not humble yet. Our pride rages that if Jesus is in the event driving then He is Michael Schumacher, or Tazio Nuvolari, or Juan Manuel Fangio and we think we are equal on the race track with him. Worse, we think we are entitled to a podium finish with him on our own merits.

Outside we look like a Ferrari, but who do we let be the *driver* within? The race is for total holiness and total conversion of life. We should have a daily sense of urgency about our work-in-progress as Christians. Will the Pharisee in us let Jesus in the navigator seat? Notice the navigator seat and not the driver's seat. Jesus knows the way; He is the Way the Truth and the Life. The Lord wants the conversion of our free will. In that we are in the driver's *seat*. We do not reach the top of the hill climb without Jesus. Often we will have to pit stop in the confessional box and let him drive. Sometimes, more frequently than our fallen will allows, we have to give way on the track to our brothers and sisters, even let them through and apologise to them, or wave them through and cheer them, grateful for their greater virtue and love. For their spiritual witness helps our salvation. Because we loose traction or get a flat, we may even have to ask people we selfishly think are mere spectators to change our tyres.

If our motive is to win a holy position then our motive is evil and our virtue is vice. This is the race of our lives—for God, to God and in service of others made by God. It is an event. *The* event. Only a truly pure heart and soul, mind and body is enough for Jesus. When you look at your Christian vocation do you see a laurel wreath and champagne on the podium? Or do you see a crown of thorns and blood? It is of course, both and all together. We cannot cheat our way to salvation, for we deceive our true human nature. The Son of Man came to free us from self-deceit to become the best person the Lord washes us free to be. St. Paul tells us that freedom is the forgiveness of our sins. That requires effort on our part to identify. If there is no blood at the chequered flag, then you and me, we are the Pharisee.

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