



Thursday 07 Oct 2021

Thursday of the twenty-seventh week in Ordinary Time Year 1

First Reading

Mal 3:13-20

A reading from the prophet Malachi

The day is coming now like a burning furnace.

You say harsh things about me, says the Lord. You ask, 'What have we said against you?' You say, 'It is useless to serve God; what is the good of keeping his commands or of walking mournfully before the Lord of hosts? Now we have reached the point when we call the arrogant blessed; yes, they prosper, these evildoers; they try God's patience and yet go free.' This is what those who fear the Lord used to say to one another. But the Lord took note and heard them: a book of remembrance was written in his presence recording those who fear him and take refuge in his name. On the day which I am preparing, says the Lord of hosts, they are going to be my own special possession. I will make allowances for them as a man makes allowances for the son who obeys him. Then once again you will see the difference between an upright man and a wicked one, between the one who serves God and the one who does not serve him. For the day is coming now, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and the evil-doers will be like stubble. The day that is coming is going to burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, leaving them neither root nor stalk. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will shine out with healing in its rays.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 1. R. Ps 39:5

(R.) Happy are they who hope in the Lord.

1. Happy indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders his law day and night. (R.)
2. He is like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper. (R.)
3. Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
For the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom. (R.)

Gospel

Lk 11:5-13

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Seek and it will be given to you.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, "My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him;" and the man answers from inside the house, "Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it to you." I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants.

'So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

Reflection By Fr John Lovell

The theme of today's Gospel is one of perseverance in prayer. Jesus gives us the example of a household being woken-up in the middle of the night by a neighbour asking for bread to feed a guest who has just arrived unexpectedly at the end of a long journey. Initially the response is, 'Don't bother me, the door is locked, we've all gone to bed'.

Although God never goes to sleep, I suspect Jesus used this example because we tend to think of God in human terms, as one who is slow or reluctant to answer prayer because He is subject to human moods and limitations, including sometimes having to have a sleep. Of course, if this were the case, we'd all be in a pickle.

The reality is we can't always understand why God delays in answering many of our prayers, though I suspect it's sometimes to *keep* us praying, since the act of praying may be our greatest need rather than the things we are asking for. Also, if we had our requests satisfied too quickly, we might come to see God as little more than one who is at our beck and call, like a nice fairy-godmother or a genie.

In truth, every prayer we pray with faith is heard and acted upon by God, though in a way and at a time that is most beneficial for all concerned.

Today is the memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, and it's the Rosary which points us to focus on the truly marvelous things God has done for us throughout the ages. It assures us of the attentiveness of God to our greatest needs, while guiding us to a right approach to prayer and to the love of God and our neighbour.

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