

Rev. Fr. Leonard Goffine's  
The Church's Year

INSTRUCTION ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*INTROIT* The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? My enemies that trouble me have themselves been weakened and have fallen. If armies in camp should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. (Ps. XXVI. 1-3.) Glory be to the Father, etc.

*COLLECT* Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that both the course of the world may be peaceably ordered for us by Thy governance, and that Thy Church may rejoice in tranquil devotion. Through etc.

*EPISTLE* (Rom. VIII. 18-23). Brethren, The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared

to the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us. For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly; but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope: because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth, and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body: in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*INSTRUCTION* There is no greater consolation under crosses and afflictions, no more powerful support in the adversities of a pious and virtuous life, than the thought that all sufferings are as nothing when compared with the coming glory of heaven, and that by a slight and momentary suffering in this life is obtained a superabundant happiness in the next. (II Cor, IV. 17.) Thus St. Augustine says: "Were we daily to suffer all torments, even for a short time the pains of hell, in order to see Christ and be numbered among His saints, would it not be worth all this misery to obtain so great a good, so great a glory?"

*ASPIRATION* Ah Lord, when shall we be delivered from the miserable bondage of this life, and participate in that indescribable glory which Thou hast prepared for Thy children, where free from the misery and many temptations of this life, they enjoy eternal bliss. Enable us to see more and more into the misery of this life that we may thus be urged to strive for freedom and glory in Thy kingdom. Amen.

*GOSPEL* (Luke V. 1-11.) At that time, When the multitude pressed upon Jesus, to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth. And he saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets; and going up into one of the ships that was Simon's, he desired him to draw back a little from the land. And sitting, he taught the multitudes out of the ship. Now when he had ceased to speak, he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon, answering, said to him: Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing, but at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes: and their net broke. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking. Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken; and so were also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's Partners. And Jesus said to Simon: Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And having brought their ships to land, leaving all things, they followed him.

*What are we to learn from the people who came to Christ to hear the word of God?*

We should listen with great zeal to the word of God, because from it man receives the life of the soul, (Matt. IV. 4.) and eternal happiness. (Luke XI. 28.)

*Why did Christ teach from Peter's ship?*

By this He showed that the true doctrine is preached only from that Church of which Peter is the head, (John. XXI. 15.) which is here represented by his ship. Amid storms of persecution Jesus has preserved and will preserve this ship, His Church, until the end of time. (Matt. XVI. 18). Peter still guides the bark in the unbroken line of his successors, and Jesus still teaches from this ship the same doctrine through the bishops and priests, as His cooperators, with whom He has promised to remain to the end of the world. Matt. XXVII. 20.)

*Why was it that Peter and his assistants took in such a draught of fishes after they had labored all night in vain?*

Because at first they trusted in themselves, and did not throw out their nets in the name of the Lord, relying on His blessing and assistance. "This example," says St. Ambrose, "proves how vain and fruitless is presumptuous confidence, and how powerful, on the contrary, is humility, since those who had previously labored without success, filled their nets at the word of the Redeemer." Let us learn from this our inability, that we begin our work only with God, that is, with confidence in His help, and with the intention of working only for love of Him, and for His honor. If we do this, the blessing of the Lord will not be wanting.

*What is represented by the nets and the draught of fishes?*

"The word of truth which, so to speak, forms the network of gospel preaching," says St. Ambrose, "with which the successors of the apostles, the bishops and priests, draw souls from the darkness of error to the light of truth, and from the depths of the abyss to raise them to heaven."

*What is meant by the apostles' calling, to their partners for help?*

We are instructed by this that we should assist the preachers of the gospel, the priests, in the conversion of sinners, by prayer, fasting, alms-deeds, and other good works, especially by good example, for this is a most meritorious work. (James V. 20.)

*Why did Jesus choose poor and illiterate fishermen to be His apostles?*

To show that the founding and propagating of the holy Catholic Church is not the work of man, but of God; for how could it be possible, without the evident assistance of God, that poor, illiterate fishermen could overthrow proud paganism, and bring nations to receive the doctrine of the crucified God-Man Jesus, who to the Jews was an abomination, to the Gentiles a folly!

## **INSTRUCTION ON A GOOD INTENTION**

Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing, but at thy word I will let down the net. (Luke V. 5.)

There are many people who by a special, but loving decree of God, seem to be born only for a miserable life, and who, with all this, can have no hope of a reward in the next world, because they, do not avail themselves (by a good intention) of the miseries which God gives them as a ladder to heaven.

*In what does a good intention consist?*

In performing all our works, even the smallest, and in offering all our thoughts and words in the name of God, that is, for His honor and in accordance with His most holy will; that we receive all

sufferings and afflictions cheerfully from His hand, and offer them in union with the passion of Jesus.

*How should we make a good intention?*

In the morning we should offer to the Lord all our thoughts, words, and deeds, all our crosses and afflictions, and all our steps during the day:

1. as a sacrifice of homage, to pay to Him the service, honor and adoration due Him;
2. a sacrifice of thanksgiving for graces received;
3. a sacrifice of propitiation to render some satisfaction to divine justice for our own sins and the sins of others;
4. a sacrifice of impetration to obtain, through the merits of Christ, new graces and gifts for ourselves and others.

We must not forget, however, in making a good intention, to unite all our works with the merits of Jesus, by which alone they acquire worth and merit before God, and we must guard against impatience or sinful deeds by which we lose the merit of the good intention made in the morning, for a good intention cannot exist with sin. It is also very useful to place all our actions into the wounds of Jesus, offering them to Him by the hands of His Blessed Mother, and it is advisable frequently to renew our good intention during the day, by making use of these or similar words: "For the love of Thee, O Lord! For Thy sake! All in honor of God! With the intention I made this morning!" Endeavor to instruct the ignorant, how to make a good intention, and thus share in their good works.

*What benefit is derived from a good intention?*

St. Anselm says: "It renders all works, even the smallest golden and divine;" and St. Gregory: "It makes all thoughts, words and deeds meritorious, and causes us to expect in the hour of death, like the wise virgins, the heavenly bridegroom, Jesus, and be richly rewarded by Him."

*ASPIRATION* Incline my heart, O God, to Thy holy commandments. Guard me, that I work not in the night of sin, and thus gain nothing by my works. Assist all pastors that by Thy divine will, they may win souls for Thy kingdom, and bring them to Thee.