

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

INSTRUCTION ON THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



At the Introit pray with the priest for brotherly love and for protection against our enemies within and without:

INTROIT God in his holy place; God, who maketh men of one mind to dwell in a house: he shall give power and strength to his people. Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; and let them that hate him flee from before His face. (*Ps. LXVII.*) Glory etc.

COLLECT Almighty, everlasting God, who, in the abundance of Thy loving kindness, dost exceed both the merits and desires of Thy suppliants; pour down upon us Thy mercy, that thou mayest forgive those things of which our conscience is afraid, and grant us those things which our prayer ventures not to ask. Through...

EPISTLE (1 *Cor. XV. 1-10.*) Brethren, I make known unto you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand: by which also you are saved: if you hold fast after what manner I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven. Then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

And last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace in me hath not been void.

INSTRUCTION I. St. Paul warns the Corinthians against those who denied the Resurrection of Christ and exhorts them to persevere in the faith which they have received, and to live in accordance with the same. Learn from this to persevere firmly in the one, only saving Catholic faith, which is the same that Paul preached.

II. In this epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul gives us a beautiful example of humility. Because of the sins he had committed before his conversion, he calls himself one born out of due time, the least of the apostles, and not worthy of being called an apostle, although he had labored much in the service of Christ. He ascribes it to God's grace that he was what he was. Thus speaks the truly humble man: he sees in himself nothing but weakness, sin, and evil, and therefore despises himself and is therefore willing to be despised by others. The good which he professes or practices, he ascribes to God, to whom he refers all the honor. Endeavor, too, O Christian soul, to attain such humility. You have far more reason to do so than had St. Paul, because of the sins which you have committed since your baptism, the graces which you have abused, and the inactive, useless life you have led.

ASPIRATION Banish from me, O most loving Saviour, the spirit of pride, and grant me the necessary grace of humility. Let me realize that of myself I can do nothing, and that all my power to effect any good, comes from Thee alone who alone workest in us to will and to accomplish.

GOSPEL (*Mark* vii. 31-37.) At that time, Jesus going out of the coast of Tyre, came by Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coast of Decapolis. And they bring to him one deaf and dumb, and they besought him that he would lay his hand upon him. And taking him from the multitude apart, he put his fingers into his ears, and spitting, he touched his tongue: and looking up to heaven, he groaned, and said to him, Ephpheta, which is, Be thou opened: and immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right. And he charged them that they should tell no man; but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal did they publish it, and so much the more did they wonder, saying: He hath done all things well: he hath made both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Whom may we understand by the deaf and dumb man?

Those who desire neither to hear nor to speak of things concerning salvation.

Why did Christ take the deaf and dumb man aside?

To teach us that he who wishes to live piously and be comforted, must avoid the noisy world and dangerous society, and love solitude, for there God speaks to the heart. (*Osee* ii. 14.)

Why did Christ forbid them to mention this miracle?

That we might learn to fly from the praise of vain and fickle men.

What do we learn from those who brought the deaf and dumb man to Jesus, and notwithstanding the prohibition, made known the miracle?

That in want and sickness we should kindly assist our neighbor, and not neglect to announce and praise the works of God, for God works His miracles that His goodness and omnipotence may be known and honored.

SUPPLICATION O Lord Jesus, who during Thy life on earth, didst cure the sick and the infirm, open my ears that they may listen to Thy will, and loosen my tongue that I may honor and announce Thy works. Take away from me, O most bountiful Jesus, the desire for human praise, that I may not be led to reveal my good works, and thus lose the reward of my Heavenly Father. (*Matt. vi. I.*) .

ON RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

What are ceremonies?

Religious ceremonies are certain forms and usages, prescribed for divine service, for the increase of devotion, and the edification of our fellow-men; they represent externally and visibly the interior feelings of man.

Why do we make use of ceremonies in our service?

That we may serve God not only inwardly with the soul, but outwardly with the body by external devotion; that we may keep our attention fixed, increase our devotion, and edify others; that by these external things we may be raised to the contemplation of divine, inward things. (*Trid. .Sess. 22.*)

Are ceremonies founded on Scripture?

They are; for besides those which Christ used, as related in this day's gospel, in regard to the deaf and dumb man, He has also made use of other and different ceremonies: as, when He blessed bread and fishes; (*Matt. xv. 36.*) when He spread clay upon the eyes of a blind man; (*John ix. 6.*) when He prayed on bended knees; (*Luke xxii. q.i.*) when He fell upon His face to pray; (*Matt. xxvi, 39.*) when He breathed upon His disciples, imparting to them the Holy Ghost; (*John xx. 22.*) and finally, when He blessed them with uplifted hands before ascending into heaven. (*Luke xxiv. 30.*) Likewise in the Old Law various ceremonies were prescribed for the Jews, of which indeed in the New Law the greater number have been abolished; others, however, have been retained, and new ones added. If, therefore, the enemies of the Church contend that ceremonies are superfluous, since Christ Himself reproached the Jews for their ceremonial observances, and said: God must be adored in spirit and in truth, we may, without mentioning that Christ Himself made use of certain ceremonies, answer, that He did not find fault with their use, but only with the intention of the Jews. They observed every ceremony most scrupulously, without at the same time entertaining pious sentiments in the heart, and whilst they dared not under any circumstances omit even the least ceremony, they scrupled not to oppress and defraud their neighbor. Therefore Christ says: God must be adored in spirit and

in truth, that is, in the innermost heart, and not in external appearances only. -Do not, therefore, let the objections, nor the scoffs and sneers of the enemies of our Church confound you, but seek to know the spirit and meaning of each ceremony, and impress them on your heart, and then make use of them to inflame your piety, to glorify God, and to edify your neighbor.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE ABUSE OF THE TONGUE

There is no member of the body more dangerous and pernicious than the tongue. The tongue, says the Apostle St. James, is indeed a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how small a fire kindleth a great wood. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and inflameth the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell. (James iii. 5. 6.) The tongue no man can tame: an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison. By it we bless God and the Father; and by it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. (ibid. iii. 8-10.) There is no country, no city, scarcely a house, in which evil tongues do not cause quarrel and strife, discord and enmity, jealousy and slander, seduction and debauchery. An impious tongue reviles God and His saints, corrupts the divine word, causes heresy and schism, makes one intemperate, unchaste, envious, and malevolent; in a word, it is according to the apostle a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue of the serpent seduced our first parents, and brought misery and death into the world. (*Gen.* iii.) The tongue of Judas betrayed Jesus. (Matt. xxvi. 49.) And what is the chief cause of war among princes, revolts among nations, if it is not the tongue of ambitious, restless men, who seek their fortune in war and revolution? How many, in fine, have plunged themselves into the greatest misery by means of their unguarded tongue? How can we secure ourselves against this dangerous, domestic enemy? Only by being slow to speak according to the advice of St. James, (i. 19.) to speak very few, sensible, and well-considered words. In this way we will not offend, but will become perfect. (*James* iii. 2:.) As this cannot happen without a special grace of God, we must according to the advice of St. Augustine beg divine assistance, in the following or similar words:

ASPIRATION O Lord, set a watch before my mouth, and a door round about my lips, that I may not fall and my tongue destroy me. (Ps. cxl. 3.)