

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

INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER



The Church continues to rejoice and praise God for the Resurrection of Christ and sings accordingly at the Introit of this day's Mass:

INTROIT Shout with joy to God all the earth, alleluia: Sing ye a psalm to his name, alleluia. Give glory to his praise, alleluia, allel. allel. (Ps. LXV.) Say unto God: How terrible are thy works, O Lord! In the multitude of thy strength thy enemies shall lie to thee. Glory & c.

COLLECT O God, who showest the light of Thy truth to such as go astray, that they may return to the way of righteousness, grant that all, who profess the Christian name, may forsake whatever is contrary to that profession, and closely pursue what is agreeable to it. Through etc.

EPISTLE (I Peter II. 11-19.) Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires, which war against the soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by the good works which they shall, behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation. Be, ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to the king as excellencing, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of the good: for so is the will of God, that by doing well you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not as making liberty a cloak for malice, but as the servants of God. Honor all men: Love the brotherhood: Fear God: Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thanks-worthy, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

EXPLANATION St. Peter here urges the Christians to regard themselves as strangers and pilgrims upon this earth, looking upon temporal goods only as borrowed things, to which they should not attach their hearts, for death will soon deprive them of all. He then admonishes them as Christians to live in a Christian manner, to edify and lead to truth the Gentiles who hated and calumniated them. This should especially be taken to heart by those

Catholics who live among people of a different religion; for they can edify them by the faithful and diligent practice of their holy religion, and by a pure, moral life lead them to the truth; while by lukewarmness and an immoral life, they will only strengthen them in their error, and thus inure the Church. St. Peter also requires the Christians to obey the lawful authority, and therefore, to pay all duties and taxes faithfully, because it is the will of God who has instituted lawful authority. Christ paid the customary tribute for Himself and Peter, (Matt. XVII. 26.) and St. Paul expressly commands that toll and taxes should be paid to whomsoever they are due. (Rom. XIII, 7.) St. Peter finally advises servants to obey their masters whether these are good or bad, and by so doing be agreeable to God who will one day reward them.

ASPIRATION Grant me the grace, O Jesus! to consider myself a pilgrim as long as I live and as such to use the temporal goods. Give me patience in adversities, and so strengthen me, that I may willingly obey the lawful authority, though its laws and regulations should come hard and its tribute press upon me.

GOSPEL (John XVI. 16-22.) At that time, Jesus said to his disciples: A little while, and now you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me: because I go to the Father. Then some of his disciples said one to another: What is this that he saith to us: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me, and, because I go to the Father? They said therefore: What is this that he saith, A little while? We know not what he speaketh. And Jesus knew that they had a mind to ask him, and he said to them: Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while and you shall see me. Amen, amen I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is

come: but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice: and your joy no man shall take from you.

What is the meaning of Christ's words: A little while and you shall not see me; and again a little while and you shall see me?

St. Chrysostom applies these words, which Christ spoke to His apostles a few hours before His passion, to the time between the death of Jesus and His Resurrection; but St. Augustine, to the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension, and then to the Last judgment at the end of the world, and he adds: "This little while seems long to us living, but ended, we feel how short it is." In affliction we should console ourselves by reflecting, how soon it will terminate, and that it cannot be compared with the future glory, that is awaiting eternally in heaven him who patiently endures.

Why did our Saviour tell His disciples of their future joys and sufferings?

That they might the more easily bear the sufferings that were to come, because we can be prepared for sufferings which we know are pending; because He knew that their sufferings would be only slight and momentary in comparison with the everlasting joy which awaited them, like the pains of a woman in giving birth to a child which are great indeed, but short, and soon forgotten by the mother in joy at the birth of the child. "Tell me" says St. Chrysostom, "if you were elected king but were obliged to spend the night preceding your entrance into your capital city where you were to be crowned, if you were compelled to pass that night in much discomfort in a stable, would you not joyfully endure it in the expectation of your kingdom? And why should not we, in this valley of tears, willingly live through adversities, in expectation of one day obtaining the kingdom of heaven?"

PETITION Enlighten me, O Holy Spirit! that I may realize that this present life and all its hardships are but slight and momentary, and strengthen me that I may endure patiently the adversities of life in the hope of future heavenly joys.

CONSOLATION IN TRIALS AND ADVERSITIES

You shall lament and weep. (John XVI. 20.)

That Christian is, most foolish who fancies that the happiness of this world consists in honors, wealth, and pleasures, while Christ, the eternal Truth, teaches the contrary, promising eternal happiness to the poor and oppressed, and announcing eternal affliction and lamentation to those rich ones who have their comfort in this world. How much, then, are those to be pitied who as Christians believe, and yet live as if these truths were not for them, and who think only how they can spend their days in luxury, hoping at the same time to go to heaven where all the saints, even Christ the Son of God Himself, has entered only by crosses and sufferings.

PRAYER IN TRIBULATION O good Jesus! who hast revealed, that we can enter heaven only by many tribulations, (Acts XIV. 21 .) hast called them blessed who in this world are sad, oppressed, and persecuted, but patiently suffer, and who hast also taught us, that without the will of Thy Heavenly Father, not one hair of our head can perish: (Luke XXI. 18.) I therefore submit entirely to Thy divine will, and beg Thy grace to endure all adversities for Thy sake, that after this life of misery I may enjoy eternal happiness with Thee in heaven.