



Fr. Joseph Samaan's Outline for the 5th Sunday of Great Lent- St. Mary of Egypt

Mark 10:32-45 - Sunday 04/05/2009

“You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant.” (Mark 10:42-43)

The fifth Sunday of Lent

- As Great Lent is drawing to its end, Jesus' comes closer on His journey toward His Passion as well.
- On His way to Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus spoke very openly about all the events that were awaiting Him.
- Despite His crystal clear explanation, His disciples still did not understand or believe Him.
- This reading is intended to help the believers make the connection that, despite the intensive journey with Christ during Great Lent, like the disciples, they might still be lacking the necessary understanding of Jesus' mission for our salvation.

The main points in this reading

- “Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were fearful.” (Mark 10:32)
 - Jesus must have been thinking deeply as they journeyed to Jerusalem about the events that were awaiting Him.
 - His disciples must have picked up on His deep thoughts, and so they became amazed and fearful.
- “He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him.” (Mark 10:32)
 - Jesus comforted the fear of His disciples by taking them aside and explaining to them what was on His mind.
- What did Jesus tell them?
 - “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will

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hand Him over to the Gentiles. They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him.” (Mark 10:32-34)

The disappointments of Jesus

- Instead of feeling sad or distraught because of the terrible things that Jesus described, some of the disciples began to argue about which places of honor each one of them would occupy afterwards.
 - “Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory.” (Mark 10:37)
- The way Jesus responded to them demonstrates very clearly Jesus’ great patience and love.
 - “Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, ‘You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you’.” (Mark 10:42-43)
- While the Lord was talking about His passions and death, the disciples were concerned only about their seats of honor.
- This was the feeling and the stand of the rest of the apostles, not only two of them.
 - “Hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John”. (Mark 10:41)

The meaning of Jesus’ words

- “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” (Mark 10:38)
 - The “baptism” Jesus refers to is the baptism of blood, and the “cup” is the cup of martyrdom and sacrifice.
 - His disciples were anticipating three thrones of honor, Jesus was anticipating three crosses.

The new rules of governance set by Jesus

- Jesus set a new rule of governance among his followers through His own example.
- His disciples are instructed not to live for and strive to obtain honors, but rather to strive to obtain eternal glory instead through their service to one another, following the example of Jesus.
 - “But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.” (Mark 10:43-44)

How does this incident relate to our own life?

- Vainglory is one of the hardest and most devious challenges that a Christian believer faces.
 - It is very hard to detect and very easy to fall into.

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- Vainglory refers to the love of fame, the need to hold the attention of others, and the desire to receive honors; the lack of any of these will cause silent pain in the soul, jealousy, anger, and more.
- The best analogy to describe vainglory: *Mirage*. It is something attractive to the point of need, and the more a person walks toward it, the further and harder it becomes to reach it. Ultimately, it is only an optic illusion; it does not even exist.
- The trick of the evil one is to convince the believer in Christ that they would be in a better situation, happier, and more fulfilled if they become richer, more famous, more powerful, and had more control to have things the way they think it is best.

Conclusions

The life of a Christian person should focus only on the example of Jesus Christ Himself and should follow His divine teachings. The game of power, money, and control is an illusion that only serves to distract the believer from his main goal to spread the kingdom of God upon the earth.

“Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God; so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.” (John 13:3-5)

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, You are the most joyful news that has come into the world to be preached to all mankind. You are the most merciful King of all. Your kingdom is for service and not for tyranny. No one else loves the poor and the sinners as You do. No one else has Your generosity, compassion, and love. I love You, O Lord, with my whole heart. Teach me how to become an obedient servant of You, O Lord, and how to follow Your most beautiful example of humility and love for others. Amen.

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