

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

September 11, 2022

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and, when he saw him, he had compassion on him...”

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost Amen!

Last week, we heard the account of a healing performed by our Blessed Lord Jesus to a man who was deaf and suffering from an impediment in his speech. We thought together about the power of the Lord Jesus, about how his word” be opened” had an inner spiritual significance for each of us as His beloved children. It was a call for us to have our souls opened to receive forgiveness and new life by the Word made flesh for us and for our Salvation!

Today’s reading from the Gospel of St. Mark invites us to think deeply and seriously about the nature of Mercy. This word mercy, that we hear so often spoken in the life and worship of our mother the Church! This beautiful word that describes the very heart of the Holy and Life giving Trinity! This morning is a call to us from the heart of Christ to meditate upon that mercy that has been so bountifully bestowed upon us and our world, and that lies at the very root of our Christian witness.

The Lord Jesus is questioned by a man who is seeking to learn the nature of eternal life, and how he might enter into it. It doesn’t take long before we learn that this man-this learned scholar of the Mosaic law is not really looking for the truth of the kingdom, but is really interested in engaging the Lord in a sort of academic debate rather than being one who is hungering and thirsting for the fullness of life. He is a man who I am sure had a high regard for the Law of God and its requirements, and yet has forgotten, or perhaps never known that the essence of the Divine Law is mercy and love, rather than a complex understanding of exactly who is the neighbour, and what are the duties that God requires.

The Blessed Jesus seeks to bring light to this man’s soul by relating a story that is so very familiar to us- the good Samaritan. Here we see the Lord Jesus explaining to the Lawyer the simple and yet profound truth that love and mercy are not simply

intellectual concepts, but are Divine virtues that must be lived out, and made real in the practise of our lives!

The Lord Christ relates the story of one who is beaten, robbed, and abandoned! Two men who should have had their hearts touched by the plight of this poor unfortunate sufferer walk by- unable or unwilling to administer aid to this one who is so vulnerable and helpless. But then, the unexpected happens- a Samaritan, belonging to a people loathed by the Jews, responds with love and pity to the one who stood in need of healing and hope! The Lord tells us that this Samaritan came to where the wounded man was, administered help and comfort to him, and took him to an inn, and continued to look after his needs! We read that the next day, the Samaritan does not wash his hands of this needy man, but asks that the host of the inn continue to supply this man`s need while he was away, and that he would repay him when he returned.

What a simple, touching and powerful story this is! I`m sure that we can all recognise the call to mercy that our Blessed Lord is speaking about here is a call to each and everyone of us, and to the Church, and the world. But as we allow the message of the Good Samaritan, to remind us of our Christian duty to show mercy, so we should remind ourselves that the gift of mercy for the Christian has its origin in the Mercy of God towards us in our Lord Jesus Christ!

Here, in the Person and Work of our Blessed Lord Jesus, we discover that Mercy is not simply a pious idea, but is the very heart of the Christian message to the world!

Here in the story of the Good Samaritan, we can see ourselves can`t we in our need-beaten, and wounded by the effect of our sins, helpless against those spiritual forces that would seek our destruction. We are the ones who most desperately stand in need of health and wholeness, who stand in need of forgiveness, spiritual renewal and peace.

But just as the priest and the Levite could not, or would not come to the relief of the poor sufferer in our Lords story, so we cannot rely on anything less than the Mercy and Pity of God Almighty to come to us in our great need. This mercy was shown to the world in the Holy Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ! It was Mercy Incarnate-Mercy that descended from the Glories of Heaven and took upon Himself our Flesh, so that He might through His humiliation, and the

shedding of His Most Precious Blood, atone for the sins of the world, and open the Kingdom of God to all who would put their Trust in His Sacred Work.

Here is where we must place our hope for relief from the griefs of our souls dear friends- in the Mercy of the Second Person of the Most Holy and Life Giving Trinity! Here is the origin of True Mercy-a Mercy that suffered all so that we might become the Sons and Daughters of the Most High!

St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians speaks of the effects of this Heavenly Mercy in our lives. He tells us of the constant battle that each of us must face inwardly as we seek to follow the Lord in the midst of this world. He urges us to walk in and by the Spirit-to walk according to the Heavenly way of gentleness and meekness-the way that leads to life and not to the darkness of eternal ruin and hopelessness.

To fight this good fight of Faith and Charity, we need above all to call upon the Lord and His Mercy to guide, strengthen, and support us as we walk this way of Obedience and Love. We can be sure that the Merciful Heart of God is open to our Prayers, as we ask for the Grace and strength to embrace the way of Holiness and Mercy in our own Christian lives.

Dear friends- I pray that each of us might meditate upon this story of the good Samaritan with love, and a real, heartfelt desire to walk lovingly in this way of the Divine Mercy. May God grant to each of us the joy of being heralds of the Mercy of God to a world that is waiting for a word of hope, and the possibility of new life and an assurance that the Father of All is waiting to come down to us in our need today, with His Merciful Heart- longing to bring Healing and Restoration to our lives that are so often scarred and broken by our sins. May we reach out to Him in Love today and welcome Him as the Lord of All- the giver of All good things!

Glory be to God for All Things AMEN