

Readings for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Extraordinary Form

1 Corinthians 10: 6-13

Brethren, let us not desire evil things, as they did. And do not become idolaters, as some of them did, as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.” Let us not indulge in immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell within a single day. Let us not test Christ as some of them did, and suffered death by serpents. Do not grumble as some of them did, and suffered death by the destroyer. These things happened to them as an example, and they have been written down as a warning to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore, whoever thinks he is standing secure should take care not to fall. No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.

Luke 19: 41-47

At that time, when Jesus drew near to Jerusalem, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, “If this day you only knew what makes for peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. For the days are coming upon you when your enemies will raise a palisade against you; they will encircle you and hem you in on all sides. They will smash you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another within you because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” Then Jesus entered the temple area and proceeded to drive out those who were selling things, saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.’” And every day he was teaching in the temple area.

God's Greater Glory

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – 1 Cor 10: 6-13 / Lk 19: 41-47
Ave Maria Catholic Church, July 30, 2023 – Fr. David M. Vidal

In the gospel, Saint Luke writes that Christ drove out the sellers from the temple. In this way, Jesus shows his zeal and love for the Father's house.

In his *Summa theologiae* (I-II q.28 a.4), Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches: “*Zeal, whatever way we take it, arises from the intensity of love. Love of friendship seeks the friend's good: then, when it is intense, it causes a man to be moved against everything that opposes the friend's good.*” And he adds: “*This intense love for God's honor consumed Christ unto the point of death. And the words of John 2:17 became literally true: “The zeal of your house has eaten me up (or consumed me).”*”

Today, let us reflect on our vocation to share in Christ's zeal. We must also have an ardent love for God's greater glory.

At the core of his *Spiritual Exercises*, Saint Ignatius of Loyola proposes as the highest ideal and the reason for our existence is to do everything for God's greater glory. With this ideal, Saint Ignatius wishes to fire up souls in their love of God.

His order has taken this formula, “for God's greater glory,” (*ad majorem Dei gloriam*) for its motto. Saint Ignatius constantly uses it, and he also presents it with another expression, “for God's better service,” (*ad majus Dei obsequium*).

This is the expression of a completely disinterested love that our Lord Jesus proposes to us when He says: “*In this way shall you pray: ‘Our Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’*”

However, to do everything for God's greater glory, we must establish hierarchy and order in our hearts. If we honestly examine ourselves, we will discover that sometimes our priorities are not God's priorities, that our desires are not God's desires, and that our goals are very much below God's purposes for us.

Then, Saint Ignatius of Loyola proposes this exercise: we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition.

In a few words, he challenges us to put God's greater glory first and then accept whatever leads us to God with love. We must look for God's greater glory in moments of peace, joy, and abundance. But if we have the right dispositions, we will also be ready to accept with patience and love even sickness, poverty, dishonor, and any other crosses we are asked to carry for God's love.

This exercise must be used particularly in the moment of choice.

In a moment of choice, when a difficult decision is before us, for what do we ask? We should ask “*to choose solely what leads us most effectively to the end for which we were created,*” that is, to procure *God's greatest glory* that will result in the salvation of our souls and our greatest happiness.

It may not be difficult to understand these words but putting them into practice is hard.

Sometimes, our love for God only touches the surface. Let us look at some examples. Let us listen to the enthusiastic love that led the Apostle Thomas to say when Jesus was firmly determined to go to Jerusalem: “*Let us also go, that we may die with Him,*” (John 11: 16). Let us hear the zealous Peter at the Last Supper: “*Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and to die with you,*” (Lk 22: 33). We know that the enthusiasm of the apostles did not go far.

Sometimes, we stop at the sentiment of affection, but we forget that true love is effective. And effective love is seen more in actions rather than in words. Did not our Lord say, “*For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother*” (Mt 12; Lk 11: 27)?

Consequently, Ignatius of Loyola closes his most important letters with this formula: “*I implore God to grant us all the grace to know His holy will and to accomplish it perfectly.*”

Then, at the of each meditation during the second week of the Spiritual Exercises, he compels us to ask for “*an intimate knowledge of Our Lord so that we may love Him more and follow Him more closely.*”

And in one of the final contemplations, he encourages us to pray for “*an intimate knowledge of the many blessings received, that filled with gratitude for all, we may in all things love and serve the Divine Majesty.*”

Therefore, Saint Ignatius places effective love above the sentiments of affection that do not go further than words and desires.

Jesus invites us to share his zeal. The zeal for God’s house must consume us!

By our incorporation into Christ through baptism and after receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit, we are called to be guardians of the honor of God.

If we love God with great zeal, how can we not be moved by the offenses that are committed against Him? The zeal for God's glory and honor compels us to work against anything that offends Him.

Our vocation is to work for God's honor, the salvation of our souls, and many other souls.

The zeal for God's house must consume us!

As we participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, let us pray for this holy zeal for God's honor and glory, and for the salvation of souls. This was Jesus's thirst on the cross. During Holy Mass, let us make Jesus's thirst our own thirst. Amen.