



PREJUDICE AND SIN

by Fr. Jose A. Aripio, SSP



A man wearing frayed denims and tattered T-shirt approached me a few years ago and asked to speak with me in my office. Having experienced being fooled by another man, a stranger, whose getup had resembled the outfit of the guy right before me, I felt wary and suspicious.

The former man had begged me to lend him some money because he had to go home to the province to attend the burial of his father and he did not have enough money for the ticket. I gave him the needed amount—only to discover later that I had been swindled.

The man before me was now asking whether we could go to my office, and very unwillingly I relented. He introduced himself as a seaman and said that he would leave for abroad the following day. I just looked at him and prayed silently, “Lord, not again.” I had hardly finished my prayer when he told me, “Father, I just want to share my blessings. May I donate?”

I asked forgiveness from the Lord for my behavior that reflected the attitude of the scribes and the Pharisees—hypocrisy. I had acted with prejudice and prejudgment while appearing to entertain the

seaman and harboring suspicion against him. But I learned a great lesson: I should not judge a book by its cover.

When the man left, I entered the Church and saw how beautifully decorated it was. How I wished that the parishioners’ worship and adoration as well as my own would be as beautiful as the flower arrangements around the altar so we could celebrate the Eucharist in spirit and in truth. I also prayed that my parishioners would be delivered from thinking that the only way to please God would be to decorate beautifully and observe rituals faithfully and that we would sin when we did not abide by these. I was not thinking that rituals should be disregarded. But I wanted people to realize that the true divine worship is our loving and intimate relationship with God.

This relationship with God must be manifested in the way we relate with our brothers and sisters. Do I see the Lord in the face of others, especially those who need to be evangelized, as in the case of the person who “fooled” me? Allowing myself to feel fooled hindered me from seeing Christ in the next person: the seaman.

The two incidents thus taught me: I should have the open mind of a true believer, trusting in God who sows innate goodness in persons and refraining from prejudice, prejudgment, and condemnation.

PASTORAL CATECHESIS FOR THE YEAR OF *MISSIO AD GENTES*

Mission Flows from Our God-encounter

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

Composed of several dimensions, integral evangelization will necessarily include liturgical life, prayer and contemplation. No one can effectively be engaged in the Church’s mission without a strong faith and prayer-life. Evangelization needs holy men and women who are themselves on fire with the love of Christ; spreading the fire of the Gospel will be accomplished only by those already burning with an experience of Christ.

Pope John Paul II (RM 47) makes a bold assertion: “We cannot preach conversion unless we ourselves are converted

anew every day.” The pope goes on to affirm (RM 49): “A radical conversion in thinking is required in order to become missionary.... The Lord is always calling us to come out of ourselves and to share with others the goods we possess, starting with the most precious gift of all—our faith.

Pope Francis (EG 3) has announced a clear invitation: “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them. I ask all of you to do this unflinchingly each day.” He continues (EG 266): “A true missionary, who never ceases to be a disciple, knows that Jesus walks with him, speaks to him, breathes with him, works with him. He senses Jesus alive with him in the midst of the missionary enterprise.”

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 86 [85]:3, 5)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long. O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of mercy to all who call to you.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Religious traditions and practices are good, but they should neither be a cover-up nor a substitute for a lack of personal intimacy with the Lord. Though we give God service with our lips and our actions, our hearts are far from him. This is hypocrisy, about which the Lord reproaches the religious leaders and the teachers of the Law in today's Gospel.

Let us pray to the Lord for the gift of a simple heart. Faith itself is a gift of God, and we are able to come close to God primarily because of his grace rather than our own merits.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (Pause)

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. (Pause)

God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, you may nurture in us what is good and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Dt 4:1–2, 6–8) (Sit)

Moses exhorts the people of Israel to keep the statutes and commandments of the Lord as a sign of their love and thanksgiving to him.

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

MOSES said to the people: "Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. In your observance of the

commandments of the LORD, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it. Observe them carefully, for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations, who will hear of all these statutes and say, 'This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people.' For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it as the LORD, our God, is to us whenever we call upon him? Or what great nation has statutes and decrees that are as just as this whole law which I am setting before you today?"

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 15)

R—The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Marfori

The one who does jus -
tice will live
in the pre-sence of the Lord.

1. Whoever walks blamelessly and does justice;/ who thinks the truth in his heart/ and slanders not with his tongue. (R)

2. Who harms not his fellow man,/ nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;/ by whom the reprobate is despised,/ while he honors those who fear the LORD. (R)

3. Who lends not his money at usury/ and accepts no bribe against the innocent./ Whoever does these things/ shall never be disturbed. (R)

Second Reading

(Jas 1:17–18, 21b–22, 27)

James insists that our faith must show itself in practice. We listen

humbly and attentively to the voice of the Lord and act on his word.

A reading from the Letter of Saint James

DEAREST brothers and sisters: All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change. He willed to give us birth by the word of truth that we may be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls.

Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves.

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (Jas 1:18) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. The Father willed to give us birth by the word of truth that we may be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mk 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

WHEN the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands. (For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds.) So the Pharisees and

scribes questioned him, “Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?” He responded, “Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written: *This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts.* You disregard God’s commandment but cling to human tradition.” He summoned the crowd again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.

“From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile.”

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of

the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us call upon our Father to cleanse our hearts and minds so that we may render him sincere worship and be filled with his grace. With humble hearts, we pray:

R—Hear us, O loving Father.

C—For Francis, our pope. N. our bishop, priests and deacons: May their way of life be consistent to the sacraments they celebrate. We pray: **(R)**

C—For the leaders of our nation: May they put an end to the spread of deceit, hatred, blasphemies, and killings and may they promote and protect the dignity of the poor and the marginalized. We pray: **(R)**

C—For those who find their life burdensome: May they unite their sufferings and pains with Jesus, and be comforted by their families and communities. We pray: **(R)**

C—For all of us gathered: May we truly offer our whole mind and heart to the Lord as part of our true worship. We pray: **(R)**

C—For our beloved dead: May the Lord show them great care and raise them up to eternal life. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Father, may we worship you with our whole hearts. Hear the pleas of your faithful people as

we promise that the graces we shall receive will always be offered for your greater glory.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

**LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**



Presentation of the Gifts

(Stand)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—May this sacred offering, O Lord, confer on us always the blessing of salvation, that what it celebrates in mystery it may accomplish in power.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface VI

(Sundays in Ordinary Time)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal. For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration, we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. *(Kneel)*



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Acclamation *(Stand)*

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(Ps 31[30]:20)

How great is the goodness, Lord, that you keep for those who fear you.

Prayer after Communion

(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Renewed by this bread from the heavenly table, we beseech you, Lord, that, being the food

of charity, it may confirm our hearts and stir us to serve you in our neighbor.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Solemn Blessing

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(Pause)

May almighty God bless you in his kindness and pour out saving wisdom upon you.
All—Amen.

P—May he nourish you always with the teachings of the faith and make you persevere in holy deeds.

All—Amen.

P—May he turn your steps towards himself and show you the path of charity and peace.
All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P — Go in peace.
All — Thanks be to God.