



THE CLOISTER

TROUBLED TIME

One of the virtues most needed in difficult times is the virtue of Fortitude which is also a gift of the Holy Ghost. It is the virtue of Martyrs, of Soldiers and of people who want to reach a heroic degree in the other virtues.

But the crown of all virtues is Charity. And now is the time to increase our love of God and love of neighbour. We should keep this as a principle: think about others before you think about yourself.

Our Lord offered His divine Passion on the Cross out of love for God the Father and love for us. During these two weeks of Passiontide, meditate upon the example given by Our Lord and Our Lady in the four gospels. The disciples found it hard to believe in the resurrection of Our Lord because they were shocked by the Passion. What happen to them could happen to us too. There is no Resurrection without Passion. The ways of God are not our ways, or as Saint Teresa of Avila said: God writes straight with crooked lines. Kneel down in front of a crucifix (not a TV or computer screen) and have faith in the victory of the Cross.

The Gift of Fortitude

1. It is a gift which perfects the virtue of fortitude, by imparting to the will an impulse and an energy which enable it to do great things joyfully and fearlessly despite all obstacles.

It differs from the virtue of fortitude in that it is not the outcome of our efforts, but of the action of the Holy Ghost, Who takes hold of the soul and gives it a singular dominion over the lower faculties and over exterior difficulties. The virtue of fortitude does not relieve us of a certain amount of hesitancy, of a certain apprehension with regard to obstacles or failures. The gift of fortitude brings with it determination, assurance, joy, the certain hope of success, and thus effects greater results. Thus St. Stephen was said to be full of fortitude because he was full of the Holy Ghost: “And Stephen, full of grace and fortitude...being full of the Holy Ghost...” (Acts 6:8)

To act and endure, even midst difficulties of the most arduous nature, and at the price of heroic effort are the two acts to which the gift of fortitude leads us.

a. To act, that is to say, to undertake without hesitation or fear the most arduous tasks, for example, to practice perfect recollection in the midst of tireless activity, as did St. Vincent de Paul and St. Theresa; to remain humble when surrounded by honours, like St. Louis; to face dangers, weariness, labours, and death itself, as St. Francis Xavier did; to trample underfoot human respect, to contemn honours, like St. John Chrysostom, who feared but one thing, sin.

b. No less strength is required to endure long and painful maladies, as did St. Ledwina, or moral sufferings such as are endured by certain souls in the course of the passive trials; or to observe faithfully throughout life all the prescriptions of a rule. Martyrdom is considered the highest act of this gift, and rightly so, since we thereby surrender to God our most cherished possession, life; yet, to shed our blood drop by drop by spending ourselves completely for souls, as so many humble priests and devout laymen do, following the example of St. Paul, constitutes a martyrdom hardly less meritorious, and one which is in the reach of all.

2. Its Necessity. It would be useless to insist at length upon the necessity of this gift. We have already said that in many an instance we must do the heroic in order to preserve the state of grace, and it is precisely this gift of fortitude that enables us to perform in a spirit of generosity these difficult acts.

This gift is even more necessary in the discharge of duty imposed by certain professions or vocations in which health or even life itself are endangered. Such is the case with the physician, the soldier and the priest.

1. Means of cultivating fortitude.

A. Since our strength is not from ourselves, but from God, we must evidently look for it in Him, by humbly acknowledging our weakness. Providence makes use of the weakest instruments, provided they be conscious of their own weakness and rely upon Him Who alone is able to make them strong. Such is the meaning of the words of St. Paul: "But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong... that he might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his sight" (1 Cor. 1: 27-29). It is principally in the reception of the Holy Eucharist that we can seek from Jesus the strength we need in order to overcome all obstacles. St. Chrysostom speaks of the Christians returning from the Holy Table as having the strength of lions, since they share in the very power of Christ.

B. We must likewise use the thousand and one circumstances wherein, by reason of the continuity of the effort, we can exercise ourselves in fortitude and in patience.

This is done by those who from morning to night submit joyfully to a rule, who strive to be attentive at their prayers, and recollected all day long, who keep silence when they feel inclined to speak, who avoid the sight of such objects as excite curiosity, who suffer without complaint the unseasonableness of the weather, who show kindness to those towards whom they feel a natural antipathy, who accept humbly and patiently the reproaches made to them, who accommodate themselves to the tastes, desires and temperaments of others, who stand contradiction without irritation, in a word, who strive to vanquish their own petty passions and to conquer themselves. To do all this, not once in passing, but habitually, to do so not merely patiently, but joyfully – this is already heroic virtue, and when later on grave circumstances present themselves, heroic action will not prove too difficult: for we shall then have the strength of the Holy Ghost Himself: “You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me” (Acts 1:8).

Fr. Tanquerey

DUE TO THE NOW WELL KNOWN ACTUAL CIRCUMSTANCES WE CANNOT PUBLISH THE MASS TIME AND FEAST DAYS. CHECK THE WEB PAGES OF THE SSPX. AVOID ANY BLOGS IF YOU WANT TO KEEP THE FAITH AND KEEP SANE.



Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the granting of special Indulgences to the faithful in the current pandemic, 20.03.2020

The Plenary Indulgence is granted to the faithful suffering from Coronavirus, who are subject to quarantine by order of the health authority in hospitals or in their own homes if, with a spirit detached from any sin, they unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion, or if at least they will recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters, with the will to fulfil the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father's intentions), as soon as possible.

Health care workers, family members and all those who, following the example of the Good Samaritan, exposing themselves to the risk of contagion, care for the sick of Coronavirus according to the words of the divine Redeemer: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15: 13), will obtain the same gift of the Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions.

This Apostolic Penitentiary also willingly grants a Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions on the occasion of the current world epidemic, also to those faithful who offer a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or Eucharistic adoration, or reading the Holy Scriptures for at least half an hour, or the recitation of the Holy Rosary, or the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, or the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, to implore from Almighty God the end of the epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself.

Given in Rome, from the seat of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 19 March 2020.

Mauro Cardinal Piacenza
Major Penitentiary

*WE HOPE TO RESUME THE RETREATS AS ANNOUNCED , HOWEVER EVERYTHING
DEPENDS FROM THE PROGRESSION OF THE CORONA-VIRUS AND THE
DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AND OUR DISTRICT SUPERIOR.*

HAVE A GOOD HOLY WEEK AND A BLESSED EASTER.
