

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

LAUDS OF THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

God come to my assistance
Lord make haste to help me

Hymn

Ant. 1. O God my God, I give you thanks; you are my God, I shall proclaim your glory

Psalm 118

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good
For his love endures for ever
Let the sons of Aaron say
His love endures for ever
Let those who fear the Lord say
His love endures for ever

1. I called to the Lord in my distress
He answered and freed me
The Lord is at my side; I do not fear
What can man do against me?
The Lord is at my side as my helper
I shall look down on my foes
2. It is better to take refuge in the Lord
Than to trust in men
It is better to take refuge in the Lord
Than to trust in princes.
1. The nations all encompassed me
In the Lord's name I crushed them.
They compassed me, compassed me about
In the Lord's name I crushed them
They compassed me about like bees
They blazed like a fire among thorns
In the Lord's name I crushed them.
2. I was hard-pressed and was falling
But the Lord came to help me
The Lord is my strength and my song
He is my savior
There are shouts of joy and victory
In the tent of the just.
1. The Lord's right hand has triumphed
His right hand raised me
The Lord's right hand has triumphed
I shall not die, I shall live
And recount his deeds
I was punished, I was ;punished by the Lord
But not doomed to die.
2. The stone which the builders rejected

- Has become the corner stone
 This is the work of the Lord
 A marvel in our eyes
 This day was made by the Lord
 We rejoice and are glad
1. O Lord, grant us salvation
 O Lord grant success
 Blessed in the name of the Lord
 Is he who comes
 We bless you from the house of the Lord
 The Lord God is our light.
 2. Go forward in procession with branches
 Even to the altar.
 You are my God, I thank you
 My God, I praise you
 Give thanks to the Lord for he is good
 For his love endures forever.

TODOS: Gloria....

Ant. 1. O God my God, I give you thanks; you are my God, I shall proclaim your glory

Ant.2 God of might deliver us; free us from the power of the enemy

Canticle Daniel 3,52-57

"Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever;
 And blessed is your holy and glorious name,
praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages.
 Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory,
praiseworthy and glorious above all forever.
 Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.
 Blessed are you who look into the depths from your throne upon the cherubim,
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.
 Blessed are you in the firmament of heaven,
praiseworthy and glorious forever.
 Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord,
praise and exalt him above all forever.

All: Glory

Ant.2 God of might deliver us; free us from the power of the enemy

Ant 3 Praise God for his mighty deeds

Psalm 150

1. Praise God in his holy place
 Praise him in his mighty heavens
 Praise him for his powerful deeds,
 Praise his surpassing greatness

2. O praise him with sound of trumpet
Praise him with lute and harp
Praise him with timbrel and dance
Praise him with strings and pipes

1. O praise him with resounding cymbals
Praise him with clashing of cymbals
Let everything that lives and that breathes
Give praise to the Lord.

All. Glory....

Ant 3 Praise God for his mighty deeds

FIRST READING – 1Sam 16,1.6-7.10-13

- Samuel is sent to the house of Jesse, David's father, in Bethlehem.
- Bethlehem, the city where in the fullness of time the Messiah, Jesus our Savior, will be born
- Samuel goes to anoint a King from Jesse's sons, but he does not know which one
- He looks to the external appearance of each one of the Young men, but the Lord sees the heart
- After all seven sons have passed in front of Samuel, he asks if there is another one. Yes, the father says, the youngest one. Youngest in the Bible does not always mean young in years. In many Bible stories we see how the Lord chooses among the little ones, those who are considered to be nothing in the eyes of other people: barren women give birth to important men, the youngest son is preferred to the eldest... as St. Paul says the Lord chooses what the world considers worthless.
- Samuel anoints David and the Spirit of God comes to dwell in him. The elect (name given to the catechumens after they have been accepted by the Bishop to receive the sacraments of initiation) are preparing themselves to receive the sacraments of initiation. On the Easter Vigil when they receive the sacraments they will be anointed with the holy chrism as priest, prophet and king.
- The shepherd from Bethlehem is anointed King. Israel will always consider its king as a shepherd, whose mission is to take care and serve his own people, in the same way as a shepherd takes care of his flock.
- The response to the responsorial psalm will be "The Lord is my shepherd..."

SECOND READING Eph 5,8-14

- Until the 18th century this letter was considered to have been written by Paul. But on the 18th century with more sophisticated research the scholars began to realize that it had not been written by Paul but by someone who used the name of Paul.
- The reason for this conclusion is the differences found in this letter from the other letters written by Paul in regards to: content, theological thought, literary style. However there are still some theologians who think that the letter is from Paul.
- In this passage of the letter to the Ephesians we are invited to live in the light. The light which comes from Christ. The light which enlightens the heart in our journey through life.
- The fruits of light are goodness and justice. The light helps to know what behavior is pleasing to God.
- On the other hand the author presents the works of evil as works from darkness, from the night.
- The elect who are going to receive the sacraments of Christian initiation, are invited in this process of enlightenment of the scrutinies to live in the light. This light which will help them to discover in the depth of their heart the darkness which is still there. They will ask the Lord for the light which will make them able to walk through the way of goodness.

- We, who have already been baptized, are called also to descend to our inner being in order to discover the darkness which is still there and open them up to the light of Christ, so that our life may be more like his.

GOSPEL Jn 9,1-41

Last Sunday we heard the conversation of Jesus with the Samaritan woman, today we see the encounter of Jesus with the blind man. John makes a theological reflection on each one of these encounters of Jesus, and presents it to the reader through dialogues and conversations.

- John will combine the words and concepts to take us to another level of darkness and blindness, In the same way that Jesus led the Samaritan woman from the physical water to the water that springs into eternal life.
- The irony of this passage is that the author will make us realize that the blind man sees and that those who supposedly see are blind.
- The blindness of this man makes the disciples ask the Lord, who is responsible for his blindness. Maybe we have similar questions sometimes, why does a baby be born blind, deaf, mute....? Because the child has not have the time to do any wrong.
- We need to hear the answer given by Jesus, it is nobody's fault. This situation will make visible God's work.
- And Jesus mentions the night as the time in which we cannot do anything because we do not see, but he is talking about the night of his absence, while he is present there is light.
- Jesus anoints the eyes of the blind man with mud and orders him to go to the pool of Siloam to wash his eyes. Siloam means "the one sent, the Messiah".
- The blind man sees now. Such a happy and wonderful event will cause different responses among the people:
 - o The Pharisees grow in hate against that man, Jesus, who is followed by the crowd. A man who does good deeds that only God can do. But their inner eyes are not able to see, their heart is blinded by pride, prejudice, hate, fear...
 - o The parents of the blind man, are afraid, but they are happy for what has happened to their son which they cannot explain or understand.
 - o The blind man is questioned by the Pharisees over and over again:
 - With a tone of irony he asks them if they also want to become disciples of Jesus.
 - The sight he has now gives him internal light to understand that the man who has cured him must be from God if he does such wonderful works which are not in the power of man to do.
 - He is surprised that the Pharisees, who are teachers of the law, say that they do not know where this man comes from.
 - The Pharisees insult him and treat him as an ignorant and unworthy.
 - After the last conversation they throw him out.
- Jesus makes him present to the man who had been blind and who now sees. In his first encounter with Jesus he could not see him because he was blind thus he does not know how Jesus looks like.
 - o Jesus asks him: do you believe in the Son of Man?
 - o Who is he, Lord, says the blind man, so I may be able to believe in Him.
 - o You are seeing him, it is he who is talking to you.
 - o I believe Lord and he worshiped him.
- John the evangelist puts in the mouth of Jesus words that reveal to us the real meaning of this passage:

- I have come to the world to divide it
- to make the sightless see
- And the seeing blind.
- While nobody is responsible for the blindness from birth, Jesus says to the Pharisees and also to us, that we are responsible for the spiritual blindness.

PRAYER OF THE BENEDICTUS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has visited and brought redemption to his people.

He has raised up a horn for our salvation within the house of David his servant, even as he promised through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old:

salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to show mercy to our fathers and to be mindful of his holy covenant and of the oath he swore to Abraham our father, and to grant us that, rescued from the hand of enemies, without fear we might worship him in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And you, child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God by which the daybreak from on high ²² will visit us

to shine on those who sit in darkness and death's shadow, to guide our feet into the path of peace."

Glory.....

CLARETIAN CORNER



May the light of the Holy Spirit guide my pen to write with clarity what God our Lord has ordered me several times and now again orders me by means of Holy Obedience. I beg, then, all the Saints in Heaven, and especially my Most Holy Mother, Mary Most Holy, at whose feet I lie prostrate, plunged in my own vileness and engrossed in the midst of my lowliness, without knowing where to begin. I cannot remain silent, and to speak is temerity. Supposing then my God, that you order me to do so, I will speak so that those who will read it will magnify your works, Lord... (María Antonia París, Foundress of the Claretian Missionary Sisters, Plan for the Renewal of the Church, 1.)

If you saw a blind man about to fall into a pit or over a cliff, would you not warn him? That is just what I am doing and must do in conscience: warn sinners and make them see the precipice of hell that they are about to fall into. Woe is me if I do not, for they could hold me responsible for their damnation! St. Anthony M. Claret, Funder of the Claretian Missionary Sisters, Autobiography, 207.)