

Adoration Service First Friday

The book of Genesis chapter 3, verse 9 marks God's first question to the Man: "WHERE ARE YOU?" God who knows everything, whose presence is everywhere asks this strange question to man. What must have made Him ask that question? Are we far away from Him that He cannot reach to us? (Pause) in these moments we shall ponder the state of our soul- where we are- where I AM.

(Pause)

In the name of the Father,

Trinitarian Bhajan:

Heavenly Father we love you, adore you we bow down before you, Holy Father, God of might enthroned amidst the hosts of light, take our life, our strength, our love, we praise you Father.

[Father]

Jesus, son of God you've cleansed our soul from sin, we love you, adore you, bow down before you. Christ, our redeemer our strength and our joy we praise you.

[Jesus]

Holy Spirit, our comforter, we adore you, bow down before you. Come and fill our hearts anew. Spirit of God fire of love burn within us, keep us alive Holy Ghost we praise you.

[Spirit]

Reading: Lk 19: 1-10

"He was trying to see who Jesus was."

Today, here in this Jericho in miniature, we each of us represent Zacchaeus; with his desire to see Jesus, to know who He is, to possess Christ. Then we see Jesus comes and calls him out and says; "I must stay at your house today." Jesus was so willing to be a guest at his house. How joyful Zacchaeus would have been, to receive that news. Probably, he was wonderstruck at Jesus' statement. "I must stay" which is not at all a request.

Here in this Jericho, Jesus approaches with an utmost earnestness to come into our homes- our hearts. Zacchaeus only just wanted to see Him. See how much he was rewarded. Let's reflect and see, how much do I desire for my Jesus who comes to me every day during the Holy hours and in the Holy Communion.

He's calling each one of us, wanting to be with us. How much is my desire? If Zacchaeus had just a desire, that only to see Him, and has received so much, how much more would we be as we really follow Him; living a worthy life!

(Silence)

Jesus is ready to come and dwell in our home at any time, even now; let's invite Jesus into our daily worries, difficulties, struggles, all the quarters of our lives with immense love and ardent desire for Him. (Pause)

As a response we shall respond: ***Jesus come and stay with us.***

(Like a litany, praise and worship is made as the crowd repeat the response)

Now Zacchaeus is on top of the tree as Jesus calls him out. We too are on top of some tree, a strong branch from which we cannot easily take our hands off.

Here the Sycamore tree signifies our searching and journeys we've had. We seek God in every quarter of this material world. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, in every man there is an infinite longing for God, manifested in many ways. Most often we climb this tree of our life hoping to see Him better-to reach God. That thirst is always there. And we are on those branches of wealth, power, talents, fame, pride, possessions, ego etc. those apparent pleasures are enough to give us immediate satisfaction that would never last. Nevertheless we underestimate that the world is God and are contented in this happiness. But no this world is not God. It cannot be. For, it never knew God.

We see in Zacchaeus, a **"Man in search of God"**; a hunger that never appeased. Climbing over the tree of my personal life by my pride, ego, selfishness, possessiveness and all my vices, I'm on a top branch hoping to attain the happiness like Zacchaeus, to see Him better. But Jesus calls me beneath. Is it too high for me to climb down?

: Let's examine on which branch we are. Which aspect of my life is clinging to me that I cannot easily come down- detach from me. Where am I, in my spiritual life, vocational journey and my religious life?

Look down! Jesus is calling me. Hurry! Come down.

(Silence)

[A song may be sung (or played): I've wandered far away from God. (STL-747)]

At last Zacchaeus was privileged to have Jesus as a guest to his house! It was a joyful discovery of his sinful life, after which Zacchaeus left behind all that made him what he was, and his possessions – the tax collection, the defrauded money, and all his wealth. It was something of greater value he discovered in Jesus than all his possessions. And it was there, with that encounter his life changes. It redeemed his past, transformed his present and redirected his future. He became, as St. Paul would say – anyone in Christ is a new creation.

(Silence)

Zacchaeus became a new creation altogether. That change teaches us something –God's abundant love and our unworthiness. Jesus came to Zacchaeus not merely because Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but moreover God wanted him. Here we see **"God's search for man"**. It always precedes man's search for God.

It's not because we are righteous enough God comes for us- not because the human kind was in all its glory God came to us, born of a virgin in a manger, but we were sinful, unworthy, unrighteous, blemish before God; for our salvation, in order to show His great love in redeeming us and making us His own.

And He did it, giving up His life on Calvary stretching out His hands upon the cross. It is to that cross, that refulgent tree we must strive to climb up. The tree of life, its branches bear unfailing fruit and leaves that never fade. It is the first altar of love.

(Suitable Song played)

“Where is your brother?”

It's God's next question to us. Dear friends, it's very necessary to express our concern to our brothers, because we are indeed our brother's keeper. Now let's remember all our brethren who are in need of our prayer, through our intercessions.

(Intentions are read out)

This question- where is your brother? It implies an important aspect that we are children of a same father, God the Father who cares for His children. Jesus taught us to call Him 'Abba-Father'. Realizing our unworthiness we should not call **our Father**- if we don't live as true sons of Him; don't say, **who art in heaven**- if we think only earthly things; don't say, **hallowed be your name**- if we've never glorified His name; don't pray, **thy kingdom come, thy will be done**- if we persuade after worldly pleasures and don't accept God's will. Don't ask for **daily bread**- if you don't care for the hungry; don't say, **forgive us our trespasses**- if you keep grudges and don't forgive others; don't say **lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**- if you don't resolve to better yourself and fight the evil; and don't say **Amen**- if you truly don't understand the **OUR FATHER**.

Therefore let's sum up all our prayers, intentions and invoke our Father who made us brothers in Christ through this prayer by reciting slowly, meaningfully, the prayer - OUR FATHER.

(Hymn of benediction)

Benediction
