



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 10:34-42; 11:1.

Jesus said to his Apostles: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's enemies will be those of his household. "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is righteous will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because he is a disciple— amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward." When Jesus finished giving these commands to his Twelve disciples, he went away from that place to teach and to preach in their towns.

Matthew 10:34-42; 11:1.

Introductory Prayer:

Almighty and ever-living God, I seek new strength from the courage of Christ our shepherd. I believe in you, I hope in you, and I seek to love you with all my heart, all my soul, all my mind, and all my strength. I want to be led one day to join the saints in heaven, where your Son Jesus Christ lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Petition:

Jesus, I want to love as you have loved me.

1. Not Peace but the Sword:

Complacency can be defined as "self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies". This is a false peace, even a harmful peace. It is a self-satisfied peace that lulls us to sleep and can result in the loss of those things that are

truly most valuable in life: God, faith, family, etc.... Jesus comes to interrupt that false peace by upending the tables of our lives (cf. John 2:15) in an effort to awaken us to the dangers that our false peace has blinded us to. As he drove out the sheep and oxen from the temple, so, too, he will use circumstances, trials and difficulties as his "sword" to drive out from our lives whatever is opposed to God's goodness and our own dignity.

2. Nothing Before God:

With this phrase we start getting an inkling of the type of sword our Lord is wielding. He is giving us a criterion that starts from heaven downward because he is trying to lift us from the earth upward. What natural relationship is closer than the one between a parent and child, especially a mother and child? Yet even this bond must be subordinate to the love we have for God. Why? Well, no creature, not even our parents, can bring us to the fullness of life and happiness that comes only from God. God wants us to love him, not because he needs our love but because we need him. He is objective reality, and we must always move from the subjective to the objective if we are to possess the truth. Jesus invites us to adapt our standards from the merely natural and passing to the supernatural and everlasting.

3. Love of God Is Inclusive Not Exclusive:

Giving a cup of water to one of the least of our brothers and sisters will not go unrewarded, and therefore, unnoticed. In this way, Jesus shows that he is not calling us to a love of God that excludes others. The standard of placing God first does not exclude love for mother or father, sister or brother. Once we love God as he deserves, we will learn to love others as they truly deserve. In fact, we merit the vision of the God we cannot see by loving the neighbor we do see.

Conversation with Christ:

Lord Jesus, following you demands my all, and at times it seems that I do not have the strength to give what you ask. Help me to stay close to you in prayer and in the sacraments so as to have the grace to live the standard of love and generosity that you ask. Mother Most Pure, make my heart only for Jesus.

Resolution:

Today I will make three acts of self-denial and offer them for someone in need of prayers.