

Annual Feast of Infant Jesus – 2017

FIRST Day of Novena

Theme: Taste and see that the Lord is good – There's no other, I am the Lord your God

Gospel: Luke 18:18-23

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "

And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

Reflection: Taste and see that the Lord is good. There is no other I am the Lord your God.

The first great commandment of God tells us to believe in our minds that there is only one God, the Supreme Being, the absolute – Absolute, the creator of heaven and earth of all things visible and invisible.

It is He who gives us life and breath and all things as St Paul tells us in the Acts of Apostles (Ch. 17). "It is in Him that we live and move and have our being." Do we remember Him in our daily life? Do we believe that it is He who is giving us life and breath?

God is the Supreme Being; is He the Supreme Being for us? He has made us human beings. Do we thank Him for creating us?

A catholic priest was once travelling by train and there was a Hindu sitting next to him. And the priest asked his Hindu neighbour, do you sometimes pray? And the man replied "Yes I do pray for some time."

"What do you say when you pray?"

"I thank God that I am not a stone; I am not a tree; I am a human being."

What a beautiful answer from a person who has not studied our catholic catechism. Do we Christians thank God that we are human beings and that we are Christians?

Let us renew our faith in God who is our Creator, who is the Supreme Being. What do we mean by Supreme Being? When we say God is the Supreme Being we mean to say that God is infinite goodness. When we say God is the Supreme Being we mean to say God is the source and the essence of all happiness. In the first pages of Genesis we are told that God created all things good. And after creating the minerals, the plants, the animals and the birds' human beings were created as the crown of the material creation. And all that God created was very good.

You may remember the incident of the rich young man in the Gospel who was attracted by Jesus. He saw the goodness of the teaching of Jesus and of his character. He ran up to Jesus saying, "Good master, what must I do to gain Eternal Life?" and Jesus said to him, why do you call me good? One alone is good namely God.

As we just saw about, God created everything good; but now Jesus says – one alone is good namely God. In what sense is the goodness of God different from the goodness of everything else? Everything that God created is good but is not goodness. Human beings are all good; they are not goodness. They can become better or they can lose their goodness. How can they become better? How can they lose goodness? They can become better by believing in their minds that God is the Supreme Being and infinite joy and happiness. At the same time, they must believe not only in their minds but also in their hearts that God is infinite goodness and joy and happiness.

To the young man whom just we mentioned, Jesus said – keep the commandments. The young man replied, all these have I kept since my youth. Jesus looked at him and loved him. If you want to be better go sell what you have and give to the poor and come follow me.

You see young people are good. And as they grow older do they become better or worse? That young man found it difficult to give up his possession because he was rich. We don't know what became of him. But there are many who think in their practical day today life that they can find happiness outside God. Some look for happiness in material wealth, others in power, others in position, others in pleasures, others in possessions, others in honour and reputation. The first commandment tells us "you shall have no other gods but me." But there are many Christians including those who never miss Sunday mass, who seem to be guilty of idle worship. They don't surrender themselves to the Supreme Being but make for themselves another supreme being worshipping themselves or some other creature who they idolize.

What will happen if you overcome your tendencies to idolatry? What will become if you become the worshiper of God in spirit and in truth? You will attain happiness. You will say with the Psalmist "O God my God for you I long, for you my soul is thirsting..." (Ps 63:1). That is why our reflections today begin with the words of the Psalmist in Ps 34:8

– “Taste and see that the Lord is good”. And in another text we read: “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! ...” (Ps 119:103).

Let us pray: Lord God you are our Creator, in you we live and move and have our being. You give us life and breath and all our abilities. Grant us the grace never to misuse your many gifts to us. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Infant Jesus as we begin these nine days of Novena in honour of you, be with and bless us with us, our families, our children, our business and work with your abundant blessings. Amen.

Novena Prayer to INFANT JESUS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“To be with the children of men is my happiness,” says the Lord. Jesus lived among the people as a friend and helped them in their needs. He healed everyone who had faith in Him and came to be known as a spiritual physician. Here, represented as a Child, He stretches out His helping hand to all those who have recourse to Him. “The more you honour me, the more will I bless you,” says the Infant Jesus of Prague.

Petitions

Let us pray

O Holy Infant Jesus, through Your life on earth, You revealed to us, by many marvels, Your hidden power. So now bless us abundantly with Your uplifted hand and graciously deign to hear the petitions who call upon You in faith and trust. Amen.

Our Father...

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us

Hail Mary...

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us

Glory be to the Father...

O Infant Jesus bless us, and hear our prayers

O Miraculous Infant Jesus, look upon us, as we turn to You, imploring Your assistance, in our needs and anxieties. Let Your compassionate heart be moved to pity by our supplications and grant us the favour which we ardently implore You. Free us from all affliction and despair, all trials and misfortunes; give us Your support and consolation; good health and happiness so that we may praise You and the Father and the Holy Spirit now and forever, Amen.

Thanksgiving Prayer

O most generous Infant Jesus, we, on our knees before You, have come to express our deep thankfulness to You for all the favours we have received at Your hands. We believe, Jesus, that together with the Father and the Holy Spirit You are our Creator and Saviour. Henceforth we place all our trust in You. Through this miraculous statue, may Your devotion be spread throughout the world and may all people pay homage to Your Holy Childhood and gain thereby untold divine blessings and favours. All praise and honour be to the Infant Jesus, Amen.

Blessing

May the Lord Jesus be with you to defend you; May He be with you to sustain you; May He go before you to show you the way; May He follow you to guard you; From above may He bless you with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Who lives and reigns for ever and ever, Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
