



9 August 2019

„Do not forget the works of the Lord“

*Deut. 4,32-40*

*'Put this question, then, to the ages that are past, that have gone before you, from when God created the human race on earth: Was there ever a word so majestic, from one end of heaven to the other? Was anything like it ever heard? Did ever a people hear the voice of the living God speaking from the heart of the fire, as you have heard it, and remain alive? Has it ever been known before that any god took action himself to bring one nation out of another one, by ordeals, signs, wonders, war with mighty hand and outstretched arm, by fearsome terrors -- all of which things Yahweh your God has done for you before your eyes in Egypt? 'This he showed you, so that you might know that Yahweh is the true God and that there is no other. To instruct you, he made you hear his voice from heaven, and on earth he let you see his great fire, and from the heart of the fire you heard his words. Because he loved your ancestors and, after them, chose their descendants, he has brought you out of Egypt, displaying his presence and mighty power, dispossessing for you nations who were larger and stronger than you, to make way for you and to give you their country as your heritage, as it still is today. 'Hence, grasp this today and meditate on it carefully: Yahweh is the true God, in heaven above as on earth beneath, he and no other. Keep his laws and commandments as I give them to you today, so that you and your children after you may prosper and live long in the country that Yahweh your God is giving you for ever.'*

Neither the people of Israel at that time nor the people of today make it easy for God to communicate with us. In our blindness, we struggle to recognize and remember the deeds of God. It is as if we are not properly realizing what God is doing for us, not letting it penetrate our consciousness and our memory, so that all that the Lord has done for us, and daily does, could become a secure spiritual knowledge, from which we can grateful life.

In today's reading, the Lord seeks to set before his people the deeds of his love, to remind them that they may awaken and give him the right answer; namely to keep his commandments.

Later we hear say the Son of God *"He who loves me keeps my commandments"*. (Jn. 14,21). To keep these commandments is the basic requirement so that the love of God can reach us. Only when we try to hold them, does God enter into our hearts

and the relationship of love can unfold. As long as we live away from the commandments of God, God seeks us, knocking on our door so that we may choose life. Keeping the commandments means life, not keeping them is death.

What can we do to better remember all that God is doing for us so that it becomes obvious to perceive His loving guidance daily.

The problem of not realizing what the Lord is doing, we also know from the New Testament. Jesus wonders about the unbelief of his disciples, who nevertheless live with him, see all that and hear what he does and yet do not draw the right conclusions from it.

One way to grow in trust is to practice gratitude, to truly thank the Lord for all that we receive from Him. This attitude is more important than we suspect. Remember the ten lepers who were healed by Jesus, but only one of them came back to give glory to God (*see Lk 17,11-19*).

It is easy for us to ask God, but only when we thank for what we have received, we realize the situation, the loving response of God to our request. The more we do that, the more our eyes are opened to the benefits of God in our lives, the more we know Him in His goodness, the more we will discover with what wisdom God guides our lives.

It is very helpful when we ask the Holy Spirit to remember all that Jesus said and did. This is exactly what the Lord has told about the ministry of the Comforter (*see Jn 14,26*). The Holy Spirit is the living memory in us and represents the constant action of God for us in the past, in the present and in the future.

So we can turn to Him and ask Him always to show us the wonderful deeds of God so that we can praise the Lord for it. In this way, we not only thank God for the individual acts, but our whole life becomes a thank-you to God, to the praise of his goodness.

In order to permanently overcome our "obduracy" and "dullness" and to join our lives in the praise of the Blessed Mother, the conscientiousness of our spiritual path is essential. Only working with the grace of God and working on ourselves will free us from the self-boundness that is ultimately a key reason for our blindness to God's deeds.

As long as our heart is still primarily concerned with the fulfilment of our desires and expectations, as long as we live in the illusion that we could create our own happiness, as long as our aspirations are not sufficiently focused on God, it will be difficult for us, to see the deeds of God in the right light.

So it will have been with the Israelites, as we have heard in yesterday's contemplation. Their earthly needs and cares were so in the foreground, the acts of God faded into the background or were even forgotten, so that it even came to turmoil. A vivid and grateful recollection of the Lord's deeds, and thus the realization of His ever good intentions, will not only help us to grow in the love of God, but also make us sensitive to all the good we receive from people. With that, love for one's neighbour grows as well!