



13. February 2022

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Trust in God is our response of love

Jer 17:5-8

Yahweh says this, 'Accursed be anyone who trusts in human beings, who relies on human strength and whose heart turns from Yahweh. Such a person is like scrub in the wastelands: when good comes, it does not affect him since he lives in the parched places of the desert, uninhabited, salt land. 'Blessed is anyone who trusts in Yahweh, with Yahweh to rely on. Such a person is like a tree by the waterside that thrusts its roots to the stream: when the heat comes it has nothing to fear, its foliage stays green; untroubled in a year of drought, it never stops bearing fruit.

As in many other passages of Sacred Scripture, here the Lord tells us forcefully that only full trust in God can bring us salvation. Only by putting this into practice will man be truly safe, come what may.

On the other hand, if someone else takes the place of God in our heart, we turn away from Him and build our house on sand (Mt 7:26-27) or, as today's reading rightly says, we are "like scrub in the wastelands", without the living water that nourishes us.

In fact, Christian prudence should teach us that we should know better: how can we expect a person to offer us the help that only God can give? Are there not enough examples, both in Sacred Scripture and certainly also in our own experience, that human beings are fallible, just as we ourselves are fallible? Would it not be a healthy realism to recognise this and, on that basis, to put our lives in God's hands? Of course this does not mean that we should be suspicious of all people! That is not the point!

However, a healthy, spiritual realism prevents us from idealising others. This also applies to the religious sphere. Here, too, we are dealing with fallible people. We can see this in the example of St. Peter, who denied the Lord three times (Mt 26:69-75) and then had to be rebuked by St. Paul when, out of human respect, he did not act in accordance with what he had already recognised in God (Gal 2:11-14). Today the reality remains the same...

But it is not only the awareness of our human limitations and imperfections that calls us to put all our trust in God. Even more important is that we recognise the love of our heavenly Father; His Providence in all areas of our lives. This is what God wants: that we come to know Him more and more deeply and know that we are loved by Him in all situations of our lives. After all, only He alone can understand our life in all its aspects. Nothing is hidden from Him: neither the past, nor the present, nor the future.

Therefore, abandoning ourselves fully to God is not only the consequence of having realistically recognised man's limitations; rather, such a step should be our loving response to His love. We allow ourselves to be loved by God; we allow ourselves to be cared for by Him; we recognise all the gifts He gives us... Thus, we understand more and more that it is a joy for God that we are a "tree by the waterside" and not a "scrub in the wastelands".

This leafy tree must bear fruit. And these fruits are not only to be understood on the natural level; it is about the fruits of the Spirit growing in our lives, for the joy of God, for the good of others and for our own salvation.

If we take this step of trusting God fully, a wonderful life awaits us. In a way, we can then taste something of the Paradise we lost. Until the fall into sin, man lived there in a communion of love and trust with God, and in it he was secure. Now God offers it again to His beloved children. In His own Son, He removed what separated us and the gates of paradise were opened again.

Therefore, let us rid ourselves of all false fear of God, for He always wants the best for us.