

St. Dominic's Chapel

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“Envy is a hurdle to see God”

There is a hurdle or obstacle we should be aware when contemplating the visions, spiritual gifts and blessings given by God to other people. This obstacle is ENVY (Jealousy). Let's take care of it during this Lent, and let's examine ourselves often on this defect.

Envy is either a pain, a kind of sadness because of another's prosperity, and/or joy at his misfortunes. One can be envious when is inwardly disturbed (grieved), and sad, if his neighbor possesses more and is more honored; or earns more than one does. In addition, Envy rejoices if his neighbor is injured or if shame falls upon him losing his reputation.

Hence, Envy is one of the most detestable of vices, because it is so frequently found on earth, and no other so destroys individuals' happiness, as well as the welfare of whole nations. Its consequences are often enmity, revenge and murder. It at once opposes the love of our neighbor, and is therefore hated by God. The Genesis Book exerts many examples, but in particular Cain raged by Envy held Abel's lifeless body, in the first Fratricide in the world.

Besides, Envy is felt towards someone else who occupies a higher position, because other's inferior condition, and fears somebody will come equal to him. Such was the envy of King Saul towards David, and of the Pharisees towards Christ.

How should we work in rooting out this vice, as soon as germinates in our heart?

Firstly, thinking that an envious person is like a devil dissatisfied at our good works, and who feels the greatest pain on account of them, for the eternal reward promised, which he has lost and never regain.

Secondly, remembering that nothing is conquered by vice but the envious one IMBITTERS his on life; peace of heart abandons him, whether he sees his neighbor in prosperity or is adversity.

Thirdly, considering that an envious person loses the benefit of all his neighbor's good works because he has not love for him; and then he becomes constantly poorer. The more gets corrupted, the more his neighbor increases in good works.

Fourthly, admonishing others that Envy devours hearts, consumes bodies, tortures spirits and frightens away all joy from the soul.

Lastly, that Envy stems out from the root of all sins, which is PRIDE. A proud person cannot endure anyone who stands higher than him, or has more than him, or makes himself equal to him. Envy therefore springs up in his heart toward those who excel him so that one becomes so bitter, not only against God but also against godliness.

On the other hand, Envy gets worse when it becomes embodied as an speculative way of thinking, particularly preaching. Instead of believing in Almighty God and His Providence, hoping in Him and loving Him above all and our neighbor in Him, most of the men wish to believe in godless doctrines, hoping in fortunes-tellers, and loving mankind in a philanthropic earthly manner. This insane way does not take long to show itself to us with all its blemishes and gaping wounds, sooner rather than later, the pride of the life, the pleasures of the lustful flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes take over our senses with a violent assault that some people are conquered in brutal disasters, as the modern world undergoing in values of life and death.

Doubtless, instead of making our last end God, our Father and Creator, the modern human society seeks its final end in earthly goods and passions. Man therefore is not longer focused in finding out what he was created for, and bringing him happiness but sadness (bitterness), which is Envy.

Moreover, the fight is much harder when we have to go forth to meet a real person, who voices out his anger in an unsparing publicity against us. It is not merely a grief inflicting us, and is giving us a feeling of right to be dispensed from the actual conflict. Do we go out to meet our own suffering? We pass from the shelter of home on purpose to meet our grief. We do our best to let suffering take us at a disadvantage, and off our

guard, amid a multiplicity of things to do, and having to look many ways at once... So, we battle with bitterness. This is far the hardest to fight, and the unlikeliest to win.

Sometimes people who strive for getting closer to God, suddenly they feel a kind of disheartening at hardships and failures. Other times, there is a sloppy attitude of performance our duties of life at home and at work. But once in a while what can we do about it?

Among us Christians, there is no sin more wide spread than that of rash judgment and censorious suspicion. Nothing more common than the trumpeting forth of our neighbor's faults, even the most trifling failings and imperfections, we spread abroad the faults of others. There are many times that we condemn upon an uncharitable conduct of envy, which is the basic sin of the Pharisees, causing them to be angry at the public fame of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, some pride frequently proceeds from the malice of our own hearts, which ascribes to others the evil we find in ourselves.

We should therefore guard ourselves against these defects and faults. This sort of attitude is a usurpation of the rights of God, Who alone is the searcher of hearts and reins, and who is Sovereign Judge, meeting out to us the same judgments that we pass upon our neighbors.

As a matter of fact, in today's Gospel Our Lord Jesus Christ wanted to prepare His three beloved disciples: St. Peter, St. James, and St. John. They were taken to the top of Mount Thabor, not far from Nazareth. It was over there that the Mystery of the TRANSFIGURATION took place.

The Blessed Lord had taken only three disciples; they were the three beloved disciples. However, there was not Envy in the others disciples, but in one – Judas Iscariot. Let us understand that they had a privilege of being taken by Our Lord, due to the degree of generosity to follow Him. Saint Gregory the Great explains in a mystical manner the degree of union between different kinds of soul. How the three beloved disciples are examples of an intimate union with God by the virtue of Charity, as a virtue opposed to the vice of Envy.

Indeed, the mystery of the Transfiguration is given to us as a master plan of rewarding suffering, willingly accepted. Through conquering our defects, we might receive the reward of our Faith. Since Jesus Christ possessed the beatific vision, His body should at all times have been radiant as the glorified bodies of the saints will be in heaven, but Our Lord kept this effect of the beatific vision hidden as it would have hindered His mission among us, which is granted by Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Perhaps the Apostles recognized Moses and Elias from traditional descriptions of them, or Christ may have addressed each by his name. Their presence, on the occasion of Christ's manifestation of glory, was a further proof to the Apostles that Christ fulfills the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Moses the Lawgiver and Elias the principal of the Prophets were the representatives of the Old Testament. Although the Apostles willingly accepted Christ as THE Messiah, they found it hard to accept a Messiah who would suffer and die, in despite of the fact that it was foretold in the prophecies. The presence of Moses and Elias, speaking with Christ of His sufferings and death soon to take place in Jerusalem, should remove any doubt.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the very act of revealing to them a little of His heavenly glory, reminded them that He hid that glory and came on earth to suffer and die that mankind might share in His glory. Indeed, Our Lord's Charity is the way to overcome any kind of sadness sprung from Envy (Jealousy). However, our human weaknesses over react always. That's why, later Our Lord would rebuke the disciples of Emmaus: *"O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things before entering into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things referring to himself."* (Lk. 24, 25).

Let's consider what an honor and what a privilege Our Lord had granted to Peter, James, and John in sharing a brief glimpse of His glory of Christ. Therefore, let us offer to Him a good Lenten Season with generosity, as driven force of practicing Catholic Faith in the midst of the reluctant ungodly attitude of the Modern Church.

Viva Cristo Rey

Father Zendejas