

Catechesis: Paul, the true apostle

Brothers and sisters, good morning!

Let us enter into the *Letter to the Galatians* a little at a time. We have seen that these Christians find themselves in conflict on how to live the faith. The apostle Paul begins to write his Letter reminding them of their past relationship, his unease at being far from them, and the unchanging love he retains for each one of them. However, he does not fail to point out his concern that the Galatians should follow the correct path: it is the concern of a father, who has generated the communities in the faith. His intention is very clear: it is necessary to reiterate the novelty of the Gospel, which the Galatians have received through his preaching, to build the true identity on which to base their existence. And this is the principle: to reaffirm the newness of the Gospel, of that which the Galatians received from him.

We immediately discover that Paul has a profound knowledge of the mystery of Christ. From the beginning of his Letter he does not follow the low arguments used by his detractors. The Apostle "flies high" and shows us, too, how to behave when conflicts arise within the community. Only towards the end of the Letter, in fact, is it made explicit that at the heart of the diatribe is the question of circumcision, hence of the main Jewish tradition. Paul chooses to go deeper, because what is at stake is the truth of the Gospel and the freedom of Christians, which is an integral part of it. He does not stop at the surface of the problems, of conflicts, as we are often tempted to do in order to find an immediate solution that deludes us into thinking that we can all agree with a compromise. Paul loves Jesus and knows that Jesus is not a man, a God of compromises. This is not how the Gospel works, and the Apostle chose to take the more challenging route. He writes: "Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval?" He does not try to make peace with everyone. And he continues: "Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (*Gal 1:10*).

Firstly, Paul feels his duty to remind the Galatians that he is a true apostle not by his own merit, but by God's calling. He recounts the story of his vocation and conversion, which coincided with the apparition of the Risen Christ during the journey to Damascus (cf. *Acts 9:1-9*). It is interesting to observe what he affirms of his life prior to that event. And this is what he says, about his "former" life: "I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors" (*Gal 1:13-14*). Paul dared to affirm that in Judaism he surpassed all others, he was a truly zealous pharisee, "as for righteousness based on the law, faultless" (*Phil 3:6*). Twice he emphasises that he was a defender of the "traditions of the fathers" and a "staunch upholder of the law". This is the story of Paul.

On the one hand, he insists in underlining that he had fiercely persecuted the Church and that he had been a "blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence" (*1 Tim 1:13*). He spares no adjectives: he himself describes himself in this way. On the other hand, he highlights God's mercy towards him, which led him to experience a radical transformation, well known to all. He writes: "I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; they only heard it said, 'The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy'" (*Gal 1, 22-23*). He converted, he changed, he changed his heart. Paul thus highlights the truth of his vocation through the striking contrast that had been created in his life: from being a persecutor of Christians for not observing the traditions and the law, he was called to become an apostle to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To be continued.

Our Lady of Divine Providence ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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XV SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00am English, Church.
10:30am Creole, Church.
12:30pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30pm English, Church.
(*Except Wednesdays*)

Fridays:
05:30pm Church.
06:00pm Adoration Blessed
Sacrament and Rosary.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

1st Communions: June 6, 2021.

Confirmation: Fall 2021.

Today's Gospel is about the mission. Jesus sends the apostles out on a mission 'two by two'. First of all they preached repentance. This entails not only sorrow for your sins but doing penances to offer to the Lord. The Apostles go out to proclaim the 'Good News' and just what is that? It is that you are not capable of loving those around you. No matter how hard you try there is always someone whom you cannot love just as they are. There is always someone you wish would change and they are usually those closest to you, because you see their faults close up and you have to live with them. There are also plenty of people that you judge or despise or look down upon. In other words there is pride. The 'Good News' is first of all to see your deep reality of sin and then to see you are not capable to overcome these sins on your own effort, in spite of the fact that you never stop trying. "Well, I try my best", many people say, but that's not enough to be able to fulfill the Gospel. You are called to love and you will not be happy until you do. This does not seem like 'Good News' does it? Then what can you do? Believe in the 'Good News', which is that Jesus Christ has died for your sins and has risen from the dead to give you a new life. The last part means that in Christ's resurrection there is hope for you, even if your sins cling to you and you cannot shake them off, the Lord, in His own good time will heal you and change your heart. The Apostles themselves must have experienced this conversion of heart through the preaching of Jesus. They were 'convicted by His reaching and cried over their sins but Jesus reassured them of His immense mercy.

Dear brothers and sisters, may we never doubt the love of the Lord in spite of our many sins.

Fr. Paul

Youth Pilgrimage to the Immaculate Conception Shrine Washington, D.C.— July 16, 2021.

Money raised \$13,819

May the Lord reward all those who helped the youth go to the Pilgrimage. We are grateful for your contribution to this good cause!



Parish Events July 11—July 18

Sunday: Holy Mass: 09:00am, 10:30am and 12:30pm
05:00pm Coeur de Marie: Children's group.
05:30pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
05:00pm Fraternité, Red Room.
05:00pm Creole Youth Choir Practice
05:00pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday: 05:30pm Mass, Church.

Tuesday: 05:30pm Mass, Church.

Liturgy of the Word, NCW.

07:00pm. 1st, 3rd and 4th English Community, Blue Chapel
07:00pm. 2nd English Community, Red Room

Wednesday:

Liturgy of the Word, NCW.

07:00pm. 1st Creole Community, Red Room.
07:00pm. 1st and 2nd Spanish Community, Blue Chapel.

Thursday: 05:30pm D. Mass Church.
06:00pm Creole Choir Practice
06:30pm English Choir Practice.

Friday: 05:30pm Daily Mass, Church.
06:00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction.

Saturday: 05:30pm Mass Church.

NCW. Eucharist

06:30pm
07:00pm



School Notes

Holy Family Academy

Tel: +1(649) 941-7875

HOLY FAMILY ACADEMY is closed for Summer Break. We will be back to school on Wednesday, September 1st, 2021.

Visit our website for information about our History, Mission and Academics! You will also find updates and news about our school year, students and staff!

www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies. Any help God will reward you a hundred fold. If you would like and are able to help contact us at holyfamilytci@gmail.com

You can also donate from the US in the following link: <https://www.rcan.org/mission-turks-and-caicos-islands>

Wish List

This is another way to help the missionary school or students who are in need, by donating any of the following:

- Moving Outdoor planters and gardening material
- Heavy Duty Sun Shade Sail Canopy
- Tablets
- Hand Sanitizer / alcohol
- Paper hand towels
- Tonner Canon ImageRunner ADVANCE C5255

Thank you!