

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

On our journey to better understand Saint Paul's teaching, today we will encounter a difficult but important topic: justification. What is justification? We, who were sinners, have become just. Who justified us? This process of change is justification. We, before God, are just. It is true, we have our personal sins. But fundamentally, we are just. This is justification. There has been a lot of discussion on this topic, to find the interpretation that best corresponds to the Apostle's thought and, as often happens, these discussions even ended up in contradicting positions. In the *Letter to the Galatians*, just as in the Letter to the Romans, Paul insists on the fact that justification comes through faith in Christ. "But, Father, I am just because I keep all the commandments!" Yes, but justification does not come from that. It comes before that. Someone justified you, someone made you just before God. "Yes, but I am a sinner!" Yes, you justified, but a sinner. But fundamentally, you are just. Who justified you? Jesus Christ. This is justification. What is hidden behind the word "justification" that is so decisive for the faith? It is not easy to arrive at an exhaustive definition, but taking Paul's thought as a whole, it can be simply said that justification is the consequence of "God's merciful initiative of offering forgiveness" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1990). And this is our God, so very good, merciful, patient, full of mercy, who continually grants pardon, continually. He forgives, and justification is God who forgives everyone first in Christ. God's mercy grants forgiveness. In fact, God, through Jesus's death – and we need to underline this: through the death of Jesus – destroyed sin and definitively granted us his pardon and salvation. Thus justified, sinners are welcomed by God and reconciled with Him. It is as though the original relationship between the Creator and the creature before the disobedience of sin intervened has been restored. The justification wrought by God, therefore, allows us to recuperate the innocence lost through sin. How does justification happen? Responding to this question means discovering another novelty in Saint Paul's teaching: that justification comes through grace. Only through grace: we are justified because of pure grace. "But can't I, can't someone, go to the judge and pay so that he can justify me?" No. You cannot pay for this. Someone paid for all of us: Christ. And from Christ, who died for us, comes that grace that the Father gives to everyone: Justification comes through grace. The Apostle is always mindful of the experience that changed his life: his meeting with the Risen Jesus on the way to Damascus. Paul had been a proud, religious and zealous man, convinced that justification consisted in the scrupulous observance of the precepts of the law. Now, however, he has been conquered by Christ, and faith in Him has completely transformed him, allowing him to discover a truth that had been hidden: we do not become just through our own effort, no, it is not us, but it is Christ, with his grace, who makes us just. So, Paul was willing to renounce everything that before had made him rich, in order to be fully aware of the mystery of Jesus (cf. *Ph* 3:7), because he had discovered that only God's grace had saved him. We have been justified, we have been saved, through pure grace, not because of our own merits. And this gives us great trust. We are sinners, yes; but we live our lives with this grace of God that justifies us each time that we ask forgiveness. But not in that moment are we justified: we have been justified, but he comes to forgive us again. For the Apostle, faith has an all-encompassing value. It touches every moment and every aspect of a believer's life: from baptism to our departure from this world, everything is informed by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus who gives salvation. Justification through faith underlines the priority of the grace that God offers without distinction to those who believe in his Son. We must not, however, conclude that the Mosaic Law, for Paul, had lost its value; rather, it remains an irrevocable gift from God. It is, the Apostle writes, "holy" (*Rm* 7:12). Even for our spiritual life, observing the commandments is essential. But even here, we cannot count on our efforts: the grace of God that we receive in Christ is fundamental. That grace that comes from being the justification given us by Christ who already paid for us. From Him, we receive that gratuitous love that allows us, in our turn, to love in concrete ways. In this context, it is good to recall the teaching of the Apostle James, who wrote: "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone." It seems to be the contrary, but it is not the contrary. "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead" (*Jas* 2:24, 26). Justification, if it does not bear fruit with our works, is only that, buried, dead. It is there, but we must activate it with our works. This is how James' words complement Paul's teaching. For both, therefore, the response of faith demands that we be active in our love for God and in our love of neighbour. Why active in that love? Because that love saved all of us, it freely justified us, gratis

Justification incorporates us into the long history of salvation that demonstrates God's justice: before our continual falls and inadequacies, he has not given up, but he wanted to make us just and he did so through grace, through the gift of Jesus Christ, of his death and resurrection. Sometimes I have said how God acts, what God's style is. And I have used three words: God's style is nearness, compassion and tenderness. He always draws near to us, is compassionate and tender. And justification is precisely the God's greatest nearness with us, men and women, God's greatest compassion for us men and women, the greatest tenderness of the Father. Justification is this gift of Christ, of the death and resurrection of Christ that makes us free. "But, Father, I am a sinner...I have robbed..." Yes, yes. But fundamentally, you are just. Allow Christ to effect that justification. We are not fundamentally *condemned* no, we are *just*. Allow me to say, we are *saints*. But then, by our actions, we become sinners. But, fundamentally, we are saints: let us allow Christ's grace to come and this justice, this justification will give us the strength to progress. Thus, the light of faith allows us to recognize how infinite God's mercy is, his grace that works for our good. But that same light also makes us see the responsibility that has been entrusted to us to collaborate with God in his work of salvation. The power of grace needs to be coupled with our works of mercy which we are called to live to bear witness to how tremendous is God's love. Let us move ahead with this trust: we have all been justified, we are just in Christ. We must effect that justice with our works.

# Our Lady of Divine Providence

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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### XXVII SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME



#### HOLY MASS

**Saturday:** 05:30pm English, Church.  
**Sunday:** 09:00am English, Church.  
 10:30am Creole, Church.  
 12:30pm Spanish, Blue Chapel.  
**Weekdays:** 05:30pm English, Blue Chapel.  
*(Except Wednesdays)*  
**Fridays:** 05:30pm Blue Chapel.  
 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:** Corpis Christi, 2022  
**Confirmation:** January 2022, Date to be confirmed.

The readings for today are concerned about Marriage. If, even the Jewish people, God's chosen people, had problems with it, is it any surprise that it still is difficult? What is the problem? Well, first of all, there is the difference between men and women. They are very different and see things in a different way. Also, each side has their priorities and often they do not match. Secondly, there is the personal differences, as every person is different. Then, of course, there is sin on both sides and the need to stay together has somehow to reconcile all these differences. What a job the Lord has given to married couples and why? If it were easy, where would be the Glory? Secondly, the difficulties are there to get both sides to grow. One analogy is that marriage is like two rough stones in a bag and over the years the 2 stones wear off the other's rough edges and finally produce a couple who really begin to accept and love each other as they are. But this is a lifetime occupation and will never be perfect this side of heaven. The second part of the Gospel, which seems to have nothing to do with marriage, is actually the key. 'Unless you become like a little child you cannot enter the Kingdom.' To become a child is to take the last place and this is what marriage forces both sides to become. One must "die" to the other. One must give in to the other person, otherwise it just is not going to work. It cannot be that you do your thing from 4-8 and mine from 8-12. One has to give up

their plan or idea for the other and that is not easy and can produce resentment and bitterness and eventually the breaking of the bond. Thank the Lord that He has given the human race the Sacrament of Marriage. This means that there is a grace with every sacrament and it is especially needed in Marriage. There must come a point in each marriage when it is impossible to go on and then what is the couple to do? In a way, they are forced to begin to rely on the Lord alone. Only He can keep them together and He will, if the couple open themselves to his redeeming love.

Let us pray for all married couples that the Lord give them the grace to mature into happy old couples who really give a sign of God's love and that this can give us all hope and reassurance, not only in the sacrament of marriage, but also in the family itself.

## Parish Events Oct. 3-Oct.10

**Sunday:** Holy Mass: 09:00am, 10:30am and 12:30pm  
 04:00pm Coeur de Marie: Children's group.  
 05:30pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.  
 05:00pm Fraterniteye, Red Room.  
 05:00pm Creole Youth Choir practice  
 05:00pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

**Monday:** 05:30pm Mass, D. Mass Chapel.

**Tuesday:** 05:30pm Mass, D. Mass Chapel.  
 07:00pm 1st English. Church  
 07:00pm 2nd English. Blue Chapel  
 07:00pm 4th English. B. Sacrament  
 07:00pm 1st Spanish. Parish Hall  
 07:00pm 2nd Spanish. Red Room

**Wednesday:** 07:00pm 1st Creole. Red Room.  
 07:00pm 2nd Creole B. Sacrament.  
 07:00pm 3rd English. Blue Chapel

**Thursday:** 05:30pm D. Mass Chapel.  
 06:00pm Creole Choir Practice Parish Hall.  
 06:30pm English Choir Practice, D. Mass Chapel.

**Friday:** 05:30pm Daily Mass, Blue Chapel.  
 06:00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction.  
 06:00pm Confessions.

**Saturday:** 05:30pm Mass, Blue Chapel.

### Liturgy of the Eucharist NCW

07:00pm English: Church.  
 Creole: Blue Chapel.



## School Notes

Holy Family Academy

Tel: 649-941-7875

### HFA Act of Reconciliation

The Holy Family Academy grades sixth through ninth have had the opportunity this week to receive the sacrament of confession. The HFA community recognizes this as a privilege because it is a time when the Church comes to us and demonstrates the most important thing we believe which is that...

**GOD IS LOVE,  
AND HE LOVES US!**

For more information see

[www.hfa.catholic.tc](http://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](mailto: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:

- Wet Floor Signs
- Artificial grass
- Cleaning Supplies and Hand Sanitizer / alcohol
- Paper hand towels
- Printing paper
- Toner Canon ImageRunner ADVANCE C5255

Thank you!