

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."
M.Gandhi



A Weekly Publication of Our Lady of Penafrancia Basilica and National Shrine, Naga City, 4400 Philippines

Aug 26, 2012

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21th Sunday Ordinary Time

To Whom Shall We Go?

Our Christian faith was known as "the Way" before it was known as Christianity (Acts 9:2; 11:26). It is a journey on which we are invited, not a system of thought and behaviour that we set up for ourselves. The initiative is God's, who "first loved us" (1 John 4:19). As Leo the Great (440 AD - 461) said, "Jesus is the hand of God's mercy stretched out to us." "You did not choose me but I chose you," Jesus said (John 15:16).

An invitation calls for a choice: acceptance or refusal. This is the theme of the readings at today's Mass. In the Old Testament reading, Joshua (whose name, incidentally, is the Hebrew form of Jesus) said to the people, "Choose today whom you wish to serve." The "gods beyond the river," no doubt, had their attractions; they probably demanded less and could be easily manipulated. Joshua's God was more

demanding.

In the gospel reading Jesus asks his disciples to make a similar choice. For Peter there was no contest: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life."

But later the same Peter would not be so clear-sighted in practice; at a crucial moment he dissociated himself emphatically from Jesus: "I do not know the man!" (Mt 26:74). Later again, even after the Resurrection, he was trying to have it both ways, and Paul had to "oppose him to his face, because he stood self-condemned" (Gal 2:11). Clearly, a profession of faith is



more easily said than done.

Joshua had said, "God is a jealous God" (Joshua 24:19). What sense does it make to speak of the jealousy of God? It is a large theme

stand God's jealousy we may get into the habit of saying the right things, but without sincerity, as in a stale marriage.

But there is right jealousy. If parents saw their daughter getting into an intense friendship with an unprincipled ruffian, they would be very jealous indeed! This does not mean that they want to keep her locked up forever. They want her to meet people who will not use her as a plaything, but instead respect and love her. Their jealousy is an expression of their love. Likewise God, only infinitely more so.

God is absolute. This means that God is not prepared to be part of anything. A God who was less than absolute would only be a plaything for human beings. Likewise the demands of Jesus are absolute. They can be rejected, but they cannot be diluted. Why? Because that is the nature of love.

in the Old Testament. In one place, 'Jealousy' is even said to be God's name (Exod 34:14). The human emotion of jealousy is usually so neurotic that we have to adjust it considerably before applying it to God. When human jealousy goes too far, it elicits weary and dull responses: "Of course I love you, dear." If we don't under-

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DAILY READINGS

Aug. 26 Sun: Jos 24:1-2a
Eph 5:21-32
Jn 6:60-69
Aug 27 Mon: 2Thes 1:1-5/
Mt 23:13-22
Aug 28 Tues: 2 Thes 2:1-3a/
Mt 23:23-26
Aug 29 Wed: 2Thes 3:6-18/
Mk 6:17-29
Aug 30 Thur: 1 Cor 1:1-9/
Mt 24:42-51
Aug 31 Fri: 1 Cor 1:17-25/
Mt 25:1-13
Sept 1 Sat: 1 Cor 1:26-31/
Mt 25:14-30

Sunday Gospel

Jn 6:60-69

When many of Jesus' disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

Augustine Aurelius was born on November 13, 354, in Tagaste, North Africa. His father was a pagan, his mother, St. Monica. Still unbaptized and burning for knowledge, he came under the influence of the Manicheans, which caused his mother intense sorrow. He left Africa for Rome, deceiving his mother, who was ever anxious to be near him. She prayed and wept. A bishop consoled her by observing that a son of so many tears would never be lost. Yet the evil spirit drove him constantly deeper into moral degeneracy, capitalizing on his leaning toward pride and stubbornness. Grace was playing a waiting game; there still was time, and the greater the depths into which the evil spirit plunged its fledgling, the stronger would be the reaction.

Augustine recognized this vacuum; he saw how the human heart is created with a great abyss; the earthly satisfactions that can be thrown into it are no more than a handful of stones that hardly cover the bottom. And in that moment grace was able to break through: Restless is the heart until it rests in God. The tears of his mother, the sanctity of Milan's Bishop Ambrose, the book of St. Anthony the hermit, and the sacred Scriptures



wrought his conversion, which was sealed by baptism on Easter night 387. Augustine's mother went to Milan with joy and witnessed her son's baptism.

In 388 he returned to Tagaste, where he lived a common life with his friends. In 391 he was ordained priest at Hippo, in 394 made coadjutor to bishop Valerius, and then from 396 to 430 bishop of Hippo.

Augustine, numbered among the four great Doctors of the Western Church, possessed one of the most penetrating minds of ancient Christendom. He was the most important Platonist of patristic times, the Church's most influential theologian, especially

with regard to clarifying the dogmas of the Trinity, grace, and the Church. He was a great speaker, a prolific writer, a saint with an inexhaustible spirituality. His *Confessions*, a book appreciated in every age, describes a notable portion of his life (until 400), his errors, his battles, his profound religious observations. Famous too is his work *The City of God*, a worthy memorial to his genius, a philosophy of history. Most edifying are his homilies, especially those on the psalms and on the Gospel of St. John. His feast is celebrated on August 28.

REST IN PEACE +DILG SEC. JESSE ROBREDO



We, the Clergy of Caceres, extend our deepest condolences to the Robredo family," exhorted Rev. Msgr. Rodel Cajot, P.C., in a mass offered for DILG Secretary, Jesse M. Robredo, at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Archbishop's Palace, Naga City last August 22, 2012 (Wednesday).

The Archdiocese of Caceres is one with the people of Naga City in extending sympathy and condolences to the Robredo family as it hosted the wake of DILG Secretary, Jesse M. Robredo, for two days (August 22-23, 2012) at the Archbishop's Palace in Naga City. Most Rev. Leonardo Legaspi, O.P. D.D., received the body of the former Secretary at around a quarter to eleven o'clock in the evening of August 21, 2012 (Tuesday). A liturgical reception was held at the Chapel thereafter. Masses were offered at nine o'clock in the morning of August 22, 2012 (Wednesday) in the presence of the

family and at five o'clock in the afternoon of the same date. Same schedule of masses were held the following day, August 23, 2012 (Thursday). Different religious communities, schools and institutions including the Franciscans of the Immaculate Heart, the Ateneo de Naga University, Naga Parochial School, and Unibersidad de Sta. Isabel, participated in the said masses.

News broke in the evening of August 18, 2012 (Saturday) that at about four-thirty in the afternoon, the Piper Seneca boarded by Sec. Jesse Robredo crashed into the waters, meters away from the runway strip of Masbate airport. People stood in shock and were devastated by the news. Search and rescue operations continued while people prayed, hoped and waited for a miracle.

In the morning of August 21, 2012 (Tuesday), at around eight-thirty in the morning, the body of Sec. Jesse Robredo was found and identified. "Faith, growth and unity- reasons why God allows pain and suffering in our lives," said Rev. Fr. Enrico Julian Paglinawan in one of the masses offered for Sec. Jesse Robredo outside his humble home, Monday late afternoon. The past few days have been characterized by hope, transcending all beliefs, race and walks of life. The life of a man who once walked the streets of Naga City, and now, the nation, have been revisited, commemorated and considered a great blessing and inspiration to many.

May the work he founded continue to ignite that little spark of goodness in every man's heart. May it not die with his death but rather move people to work and aspire for something good and greater than themselves. Ultimately, may his life always be a testimony that indeed, few as they are, good men have walked the earth to prove that things can be changed, goodness can prevail; yes, it can happen, if and only if man chooses to be different by being bold enough to be the change he wants to see in this world (Natalie Quimlat).

Pope to Visit Lebanon

As fighting in neighboring Syria rages on, Pope Benedict XVI has confirmed that he will proceed with his trip to Lebanon as planned.

"The Christians in Lebanon are looking forward to the Holy Father's visit with great joy," Maronite Patriarch Cardinal Boutros Rai told Aid to the Church in Need Aug. 22.

Escalating violence in Syria and increased tensions in Lebanon gave rise to speculation that the Pope would postpone or cancel his Sept. 14-16 trip. "Of course the visit will go ahead," Cardinal Rai confirmed.

Just last week an assassination plot against Cardinal Rai, who is the highest ranking dignitary in the Maronite Church, was prevented when one of the conspirators informed Lebanon's domestic secret service of the plan.



Pope: On Lay Participation

As Catholics prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, all church members need to make a renewed effort to ensure laypeople are aware of their responsibility for the church and are allowed to exercise it, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"Co-responsibility requires a change of mentality, particularly regarding the role in the church of the laity, who should not be considered 'co-laborators' of the clergy, but people who truly are co-responsible for the being and action of the church," the pope wrote in a message to the assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action.

The Aug. 22-26 assembly in Iasi, Romania, brought together representatives of Catholic Action groups from around the world. The international forum promotes lay involvement in parish and community life, particularly through studying and acting on the principles of Catholic social teaching.



Archdiocesan News

Caceres Clergy Prepares for Penafrancia

The Caceres Clergy will once again gather for a Penafrancia Recollection on August 28, at the Holy Rosary Major Seminary. The Archbishop will give a talk on Vatican II: A Review, as a preparation for the Year of Faith Celebration. Before the talk, there will be a brief meeting which will discuss the upcoming Penafrancia activities. After lunch, the priests will proceed to the basilica for the blessing as well as Mass at 5pm. The Procession of the Divino Rostro to Penafrancia Old Shrine will follow



The Penafrancia Clergy Recollection held last year at the Basilica Hall

City Govt and Caceres Join Forces

The Archdiocese of Caceres and the Naga City Govt and other govt. agencies are once again joining forces for the upcoming Penafrancia Celebrations. Fr. Edgar Adversario, Chair of ISHARE, said that it will be the third year of the Joint Operation in order to assure the safety of the devotees as well as success of the Penafrancia celebrations this year. The representatives will have a MOA signing next week and the press conference at the Archbishops residence.



BASILICA NEWS

Caceres Concelebrated Mass for +Sec. Robredo

Archbishop Legaspi together with all the clergy of Caceres will celebrate mass in honor of DILG Sec. Jesse Robredo on Aug 27, at 5pm at the Basilica Minore. It is indeed fitting that Sec. Jess will have the final rites at the home of INA whom he had devoutly loved and venerated. Sec. Jess was an ardent voyador.

Early this year, a decree was issued prohibiting any funeral mass at the Basilica. But a special permission was allowed by the Archbishop to allow the funeral mass.



a picture of a voyador +Sec. Jess in one of the Traslacion Processions the past years.

VOYADORES GATHERING

All voyadores are invited to attend the General assembly of all voyadores dubbed as AN PAKIPAGTIPAN KAN COFRADIA DE SAN JOSE KI INA on September 1, 2012 at the Penafrancia Basilica Minore

The schedule are as follows:

- 6:00pm - Arrival Registration
- 7:00 - Songs of Praise
- 7:30 - Talk - Fr. Louan Jarcia
- 8:30 - Confession
- 9:30 - Healing - Fr. Pons Grageda
- 10:30 - Procession
- 12:00 - Songs of Praise
- 12:30 am - Testimonies
- 3:00 - Mass - Msgr Rodel Cajot
- 4:00 - Home Sweet Home

OUR FRIENDLY REMINDER!

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GOWNS



LONG SKIRTS



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SLACK PANTS



SHIRTS / T-SHIRTS



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PUBLIC WARNING

The Basilica has not authorized anybody to solicit or collect any donation or mass offering. We are making this warning after the recent incident of fraudulent act committed by some individuals using the name of priests, religious or even parishes. Please make sure that you are giving your donations at the Basilica office.

Thank you

PENAFRANCIA FIESTA 2012

August 28 - 5pm - Mass at the Basilica
Procession to Penafrancia Parish
August 31 - 8am - Harubay para ki INA (Basilica Assembly)
August 29-Sept 7 - Novenario (Divino Rostro)
Sept 6-16 - 3rd Bishop Gainza Trade Fair
Sept. 7 - 3:30am - Dawn Procession Basilica-Penafrancia Parish
3pm - Traslacion Procession to Cathedral
5pm -Mass (Archbishop Legaspi)
Start of Novenario in honor of INA
Sept 15 - 4pm Fluvial Procession
Mass (Archbishop Chito Tagle)
Sept 16 - FEASTDAY OF INA



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