

For the Memorial of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious. Wednesday of the Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time. (21 June 2017) (Sajnos, nincs magyar fordítás!)

Readings:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/062117.cfm>

Homily:

(Mt 6:1-6, 16-18) Almsgiving, prayer and fasting figure among the greatest of good deeds. Yet in today's gospel, we heard how even these supreme works of religion can be infected by the pride of hypocrisy. We can perform them primarily or secondarily to win the esteem of others. St. Augustine said, "Every other kind of sin is concerned with the commission of evil deeds; but pride infects even good works in order to destroy them." (Regula) The only remedy against this most subtle of sins is spiritual death. Here's what St. Louis de Montfort wrote on the subject: "Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain and does not bear any good fruit. If we do not die to self and if our holiest devotions do not lead us to this necessary and fruitful death, we shall not bear fruit of any worth and our devotions will cease to be profitable. All our good works will be tainted by self-love and self-will so that our greatest sacrifices and our best actions will be unacceptable to God." (True Devotion, 81)

In today's first reading, St. Paul said, "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2Cor 9:6) Our Lord said, "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Mt7:2) In order to obtain the infinite all – God Himself – we must surrender our finite all: our very selves. This holy transaction was actually made for us at our baptism. We can't repeat our baptism – nor need we do so – but we can renew it, thereby actualizing the graces we then received. The renewal of baptism is at the heart of True Devotion as explained by St. Louis de Montfort. Renewing our baptism in this way affords us three added benefits. First, instead of our godparents acting on our behalf, we can now speak for ourselves. Second, in addition to offering Jesus our very selves, now we can also offer Him what He leaves to our own discretion: the right to dispose of the value of our good works. We thereby despoil ourselves of what we Christians consider most precious: our merits and satisfactions. Third, what was done implicitly at our baptism can now be repeated explicitly. Let me explain!

At our baptism, we became the adopted children of Our Heavenly Father. That is no secret. But what does amount to a well-kept secret of sorts is that at our baptism we also became the adopted children of Jesus' mother, Mary. At baptism, we became members of Christ's body, of which He is the head. Now, the head and members of one and the same body must have the same father and mother – in our case, God and Mary. The logic is inescapable. Baptism is profoundly Marian. So too must be the Christian life which it inaugurates. When we renew our baptism, we can make this implicit truth explicit by giving ourselves to Jesus through Mary. On Calvary Christ saved us. That is no secret. What is a secret of sorts is that on Calvary – through her crucial consent – Mary became a full partner to Christ's saving deed. In other words, she too saved us! The same cannot be said of anyone else, be he angel or saint, pope or mystic. Two unofficial secrets, yet both are facets of one glorious truth: Mary is our co-redemptrix. The serpent is Satan. His venom is pride, but Mary is the woman who crushes his head. (See Gen3:15, Vulgate)

I would like to end with a prayer composed by today's saint, Aloysius Gonzaga: "O holy Mary, my Mistress into thy blessed trust and special keeping, into the bosom of thy tender mercy, this day, every day of my life and at the hour of my death, I commend my soul and body; to thee I entrust all my hopes and consolations, all my trials and miseries, my life and the end of my life, that through thy most holy intercession and thy merits, all my actions may be ordered and disposed according to thy will and that of thy divine Son. Amen."