

OCTOBER 16, 2021
Memorial of St. Marguerite d'Youville, Religious
Luke 12: 8-12

“STAND UP FOR CHRIST, OUR MASTER.”

Jesus knew what will happen to Him: He will be persecuted, condemned, denied, crucified but at the end He will be glorified and seated at the right hand of God the Father. In all His discourse, instructions and commands, He prepared His disciples to what will be their lives after declaring and following Him, that is, trials and persecutions in the future. For those who are faithful to their commitment and to their faith in Jesus as their Savior will be rewarded eternal life. As we heard in our gospel today, Jesus is telling us “everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God.”¹ When we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He will acknowledge us as His beloved disciples. Most of the time, this will be challenged in difficult times in our lives. When there is persecutions, trials, abuses and sufferings, that’s the time we need to stand and pronounce on the top of our voice our allegiance to Jesus our Master. When we deny Him, we will win a reprieve or we are acquitted in this life but not in the next life. So, denying Him is disowning our Master. Jesus also mentioned “And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.”² Why when we sinned against the Son of Man, we will be forgiven but not when we sinned against the Holy Spirit? “To speak against the Son is clearly wrong but, with repentance, there can be reconciliation. But to sin against the Spirit is to go against Truth itself. This was basically the sin of the Scribes and Pharisees. They not only criticised Jesus; that could be understood. But they locked themselves into a situation where they shut out any openness to the truth, the Truth that others could so easily see present in Jesus. As long as they were in that situation, there was no possibility of reconciliation. Forgiveness in the Gospel is not just a unilateral move on one person’s part. It always involves a coming together of two opposing parties in reconciliation. To sin against the Spirit is to close the door on reconciliation.”³ Why

¹ Luke 12: 8-9 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

² Luke 12: 10 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

³ livingspace.sacredspace.ie

blasphemy is unforgivable? Because it is speaking against God, interiorly or externally, words of hate, rebuke, or defiance. This is contrary to the honor and respect we give and owe to God who is our Father, Creator, and Savior and to His most holy name. In other words, we reject the gift and help of the Holy Spirit. We do not want God into our lives and close our hearts and minds to the promptings of the Holy Spirit by denying the existence of God into our lives.

My brothers and sisters, there will be time that we will experienced suffering severely for our faith in Jesus, our beliefs and practices mocked, ridiculed and made fun of by others. There will be temptations that time of persecution to hide and conceal our Christian faith and identity. We may even not give support to those people who are under attack or refuse to stand by them, and be counted as committed followers of Christ and the Gospel. When this happened in the past, let us ask the Lord for forgiveness and pray that in future, we may have the strength, fortitude, and courage to stand in word and deed for Christ so that people may know who we are and what we stand for.

This was the life of St. Marguerite, the first Canadian-born saint canonized by St. Pope John Paul II. “Despite the many great difficulties in her young life, Marguerite maintained her involvement in various religious and charitable organizations when she was 26 years old. A profound religious awakening prompted her to dedicate her life to charity. On 31 December 1737 Marguerite and three colleagues formed an association to help the poor and opened a home to welcome them. This association, known as the Sisters of Charity, would evolve over time into the Grey Nuns. Many people attested to her prophetic gifts and miraculous healing powers. For example, a young woman stricken with acute myeloblastic leukaemia in 1978 claimed to have been miraculously cured through her intercession.”⁴ She stand on her faith in Jesus despite of many difficulties, served those less fortunate and follow the will of God. So, my brothers and sisters, let us ask in this Eucharist the courage to stand for Christ, serve the poor, our brothers and sisters and offer our lives in defending Christ amidst difficulties and death.

⁴ www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca