

# 5 November

## ST. GUIDO MARIA CONFORTI

Solemnity

From the common of pastors, except for the following

**FIRST READING**

Ephesians 3:1-21

So I, Paul a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you pagans... You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery, as I have just described it very shortly. If you read my words, you will have some idea of the depths that I see in the mystery of Christ. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel. I have been made the servant of that gospel by a gift of grace from God who gave it to me by his own power.

I, who am less than the least of all the saints, have been entrusted with this special grace, not only of proclaiming to the pagans the infinite treasure of Christ, but also of explaining how the mystery is to be dispensed. Through all the ages, this has been kept hidden in God, the creator of everything. Why? So that all the Sovereignities and Powers should learn only now, through the Church, how comprehensive God's wisdom really is, exactly according to the plan which he had from all eternity in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is why we are bold enough to approach God in complete confidence, through our faith in him; so, I beg you, never lose confidence just because of the trials that I go through on your account: they are your glory.

This, then, is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name.

Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then planted in love and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God. Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

#### RESPONSORY

Cf. Acts 20:28; 1Cor 4:2

**R.** Watch over the flock entrusted to your care by the Holy Spirit, to guide the Church of God that Christ purchased with his blood.

**V.** The steward must be worthy of trust.

**R.** To guide the Church of God that Christ purchased with his blood.

#### SECOND READING

From the speeches of St. Guido M. Conforti

Seventeenth address to departing missionaries, 11 March 1928

This memorable evening reminds you, and all of us, of another evening, when Christ spoke to his Apostles with great tenderness after the last supper; in a certain sense he was dictating his testament to them. He exhorted them to believe firmly in him, et in me credite; to love each other and to remain in intimate union with him, as the branches are united to the vine. He told them they would endure tribulations and persecutions and, finally, he turned to his

Heavenly Father in prayer for them and for those who would later believe in him. He ended his sublime sermon with the fervent wish that they would one day be with him. Beloved young missionaries, who are about to begin your apostolate, consider these words of the Divine Master as a message to you; the beloved apostle handed them down to us faithfully in the sublime discourse of the last Supper, which began in the Upper Room and ended at the threshold of Gethsemane. Meditate upon these words because they must become the program of your apostolate.

Do you wish to guarantee the outcome of your apostolate? Have first and foremost a living faith in our Divine Master. Faith should shape all your thoughts, affections and works. Refer to it all your encounters, in all the situations of your life, and govern yourselves according to its dictates. It must be your constant guide.

Cultivate mutual love; may this bind your hearts together closely and make you as one heart and one soul so that you always share the same joys and sorrows. You shall thus possess an invincible strength against which your enemies shall be unable to prevail.

Always remain intimately united to Jesus as the branch to the vine. United in mind and heart, united in the meditation of his heavenly doctrine, united to the Eucharist whose ministers and dispensers you are, united in prayer, united through the constant effort to conform to him, the model of perfection for all, but especially for the Apostles.

Thus will your apostolate be fecund and you will produce great fruits. But do not forget that you must sow in tears. This is why Christ said you would be persecuted, so that you should not be scandalized one day: *Si me persecuti sunt, et vos persequentur.* The Confreres who have gone before you in the mission field have already experienced the truth of these prophetic words. They have already endured imprisonment, hardships and tribulations of every kind.

Your destiny shall not be unlike theirs because your mission is identical to theirs, and you shall also have to face the same difficulties. This is the apostle's cup and Christ will offer it to you, repeating the words he said

some two thousand years ago to the sons of Zebedee: *Potestis bibere calicem quem ego bibiturus sum?*

But at the same time he insists: let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. Your sadness shall turn to joy. These words shall come true for you too because Christ has asked his eternal Father in prayer to fulfill them for you. Holy Father, save those you have entrusted to me and grant that one day they may be where I am. Recall these holy words often to mind when you find yourself in times of trial, and you shall always be able to rejoice in spite of everything, because you shall also remember that your joy shall be proportionate to your suffering. Have no doubts, one day you too shall share in the glory of the Apostles; you shall participate in the same glory and happiness of Christ.

#### RESPONSORY

Cfr. Mk 16:15-16; Jn 3:5

**R.** Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation; \*he who believes and is baptized will be saved.

**V.** Unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

**R.** He who believes and is baptized will be saved.

#### Hymn Te Deum

#### PRAYER

O Lord, through the contemplation of the Cross, you gave your bishop, St. Guido Maria Conforti, [the Founder of our missionary Family], an intense desire to proclaim the Gospel to all peoples, and gave him to the Church as a strong and generous pastor; grant that, through his intercession, we too may work unceasingly for the salvation of all, inspired by the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

**R.** Amen.