Dimanche 5me après Pentecôte 2014

« Be ye all of one mind. » (1 Pet. 3 :8) [the crampon translations seems wrong here—a form of « soyez » should be used here—2nd person plural imperative, to follow the Latin « estote »

In the Epistle today, St. Peter gives us extremely practical directions on how we are to live in the world, in a positively un-worldly manner.

In the first place, St. Peter addresses himself to the community of believers, the Church. This is important to emphasize in our radically individualistic society, whose motto might be « Every man for himself. » The motto of the Christian, however, must be « love thy neighbor as thyself. » How is this realized on the practical level? « Be ye all of one mind *in prayer*. » There is no true love of neighbor without love for God—a love which in the first place is expressed in prayer. In prayer, we offer ourselves to God—heart, mind, body and soul—and receive in return Divine Life—grace dwelling in the soul, by faith. It is the grace of God—when stirred up in our hearts—which enables us to be « compassionate, lovers of fraternité, merciful, modest, humble. »

This fraternal charity is to be practiced first at home, towards the members of our own family. A few verses ahead of where the Epistle begins today, St. Peter reminds les femmes que « Sara obéissait à Abraham, le traitant de Seigneur. » Similarly, husbands are admonished to love their wives and to cherish them, « les traitant avec honneur. » While children are not specifically mentioned in this passage, it is certain that they, too, are « héritières de la grâce qui donne la vie »--and are also deserving of love and respect—which they in turn are required to repay in justice in honoring and obeying their parents. If this fundamental order is lacking in the home, how can we ever expect to be effective witnesses of the Gospel in the world?

As we go about our day-to-day affairs in the world, it is easy to become completely preoccupied with staking out our own rights, to think always of what is due to us in justice from others : be it from family members, employers, the Church, the State. This preoccupation follows the logic of the world—but is alien to spirit of the Gospel : « Ne rendez point le mal pour le mal, ni l'injure pour l'injure; bénissez, au contraire. » So often we are afraid to put this « hard saying » of the Gospel into practice, lest we find ourselves injured as a result. St. Peter, too, knows this fear—but he knows also that « perfect love casteth out all fear. » As so, he can say, consoling all of us : « si pourtant vous souffrez pour la justice, heureux êtes-vous! Ne craignez point leurs menaces et ne vous laissez point troubler; ‬mais sanctifiez dans vos coeurs le Seigneur, le Christ. »