

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Resurrection of the Soul

“I say to thee, arise” (Luke, 7:14)

It must have produced a tremendous impression on the people of Naim to witness the miracle related in today’s Gospel. In a small town all the people are intimately acquainted with one another; the sorrows of one family are felt in all homes. So, there must have been deep sorrow in the hearts of all the kindly people of Naim when they heard that their neighbour, a poor widow, had lost her only son by death.

We can presume that practically all the inhabitants of the village attended the funeral, and consequently beheld the wondrous miracle that took place when Our Lord said, “Young man, I say to thee, arise,” and he that was dead sat up.

When we lose a dear one by death, to what lengths we would gladly go to have him restored to life. If Jesus Christ were still on earth in visible form, we surely would approach Him and ask Him to use His miraculous power and restore this loved one to life, as He did the youth of Naim. And we know that the power of Christ is as great today as it was nineteen centuries ago; if He willed, He would bring this person back to life.

However, nowadays it is ordinarily not God’s plan to have miracles of this extraordinary nature take place, as it was when Christ was proving His divine mission. But there is a miracle of spiritual resurrection which Our Lord is ready to perform, not as something rare and extraordinary, but as an ordinary and frequent phase of the Christian life.

This takes place whenever a soul is freed from mortal sin. For when a person possessing the state of grace commits a mortal sin, death enters his soul. The bright and beautiful image of God conferred by sanctifying grace is obliterated; the soul becomes more hideous in the sight of God than a corrupted corpse. Only God’s power can restore that soul to life. But God’s power is at our disposal if we have recourse to Him.

The great and consoling means at our disposal to obtain this spiritual resurrection from sin is the sacrament of Penance. When the sinner, no matter how far he may have gone on the way of iniquity, makes a good confession with true contrition of heart, he is restored to the life of grace, and his spiritual mother, the Church, embraces him joyfully, as the widow of Naim embraced her son brought back from death by the power and mercy of Jesus Christ.

Practical Application

If you have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin, do not remain in that sad condition. Remember that while you are in mortal sin your soul is dead, unable to acquire heavenly merit, deserving of eternal punishment.

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Come back to God by a good confession and in the meantime seek restoration to grace by an act of perfect contrition with the intention of receiving the sacrament of Penance.