

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A

In this Sunday's first reading, the Israelites are called to conversion. In order to return to their homeland, they must return to God, must seek him, and the Lord, who allows himself to be found and who does not judge in the way that men do, is willing and able to grant forgiveness. In other words, the call to repentance is grounded on the goodness of God who will abundantly pardon.

Man, for his part, should grasp this opportunity that God offers him. So, the words in our first reading are a constant encouragement to begin and begin again in the pursuit of virtue. As Pope St. John Paul II writes: "To be converted means to ask for forgiveness and to seek out the strength of God in the Sacrament of reconciliation, and thus begin again, advancing step by step every day, learning to overcome ourselves, to win the spiritual battles that we face, and to give of ourselves joyfully, 'for God loves a cheerful giver'" (*Novo incipiente*, 8 April 1979).

Similarly, St. Augustine, in one of his expositions on the Psalms, writes: "Do not say: 'Tomorrow, I will be converted; tomorrow, I will give thanks to God; and all my sins, today's and yesterday's, will be forgiven.' It is true that God promises forgiveness for your conversion; but He does not promise tomorrow for your delays" (144, 11).

As the Lord exhorts us through the prophet Isaiah: "Come now, let us set things right, says the Lord: Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow; Though they be red like crimson, they may become white as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). So then, let us do good while it is still "today" (Galatians 6:10; Hebrew 3:13).

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