

Divinity Transcendent

April 8, 2017

If ever there is a moment of the year when it is specially fitting to contemplate the suffering and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that moment is surely today, on the eve of Palm Sunday, just before Holy Week. And that contemplation has become more necessary with each year for the last 50 years, because the suffering of Mother Church which broke out with Vatican II has become more and more scandalous, more and more mysterious. We all need to remind ourselves that God is mysterious, in other words that He goes infinitely above and beyond our little human minds. Otherwise we risk cutting Him down to size in order to fit Him into those little minds. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts: nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts" (Is. LV, 8-9).

This great lesson is taught in the fifth Joyful Mystery of the Holy Rosary, when at the age of 12 Our Lord allowed Himself to be lost by His Mother and St Joseph in order to remind them that He had to be about His Father's business. His Mother could not understand – "Son, why hast thou done so to us?" He had caused three days of intense anxiety to his human parents – "Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." Our Lord replied as though they had been anxious for no reason – "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Yet so intense had been His parents' anxiety that humanly this answer made no sense – "And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them." However, His Mother knew better than to question her Son any further. Instead she "kept all these words in her heart" (Lk. II, 48-51), to see why God was right although she could not understand.

To the future head of the Church, Rock on which it would be

built, the same lesson of God's ways far transcending our own needed to be taught, albeit somewhat more roughly than to Our Lord's gentle Mother. All too humanly, Peter rebukes Our Lord for daring to tell the Apostles that He is going up to Jerusalem to suffer and to die. Our Lord's reply is stinging: "Get thee behind me, satan!," yet the explanation is essentially the same as it was to His Mother, "because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men" (Mt. XVI, 21-23). Peter, just appointed Rock of the Church (Mt. XVI, 18-19), can least of all be allowed to think humanly instead of divinely when it will come to governing the Church.

But of course Our Lord does recognise the problem of human beings thinking too humanly when it comes to the things of God. That is why, soon after the rebuke to Peter, He took him with James and John up Mount Tabor in order by His Transfiguration to let the Godhead's divinity shine out from within the human nature. Thus the Apostles might soon all of them be shaken to the core by the terrible deicide in Jerusalem, but three of them would be able to give witness to what they had seen with their own eyes (cf. II Peter I, 16-18), before the Passion, of the Godhead blazing from within the man crucified on Calvary.

And in our own day? Catholics know that the life of the Catholic Church is the continuation on earth of the Incarnate life of Christ on earth, so that in principle they know that as Christ's 33 years ended in His Passion and Death, so the Church may finish its time on earth by bleeding from all wounds until it is virtually extinguished. Nevertheless to see it in practice, happening under one's eyes, can shake the faith of many a good man – "How is it possible that these Popes, these Cardinals and these Bishops are the carriers of God's authority in the structure of His one true Church?" Of course they are not in general its faithful carriers, but where else are its structural carriers? Patience. God was

still there, being dragged to Calvary, so He is still there,
being dragged into the New World Order. But He has not said
His last word!

Kyrie eleison.