

Psalmist's Cry

December 20, 2014

The season of Our Redeemer's coming amongst us is surely a suitable moment to remind ourselves how much we need God. Of course it has always been so. Before Christ, God came into the ever more wicked pagan world specially to the Israelites with the Old Testament to prepare for the coming of his own Son. Here is Psalm 43, all of which applies both to the Israelites and to Catholics, God's people in Old and New Testaments (Revised Standard Version, titles and brackets added):—

A. GOD USED TO PROTECT HIS PEOPLE.

1 We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what deeds thou didst perform in their days, in the days of old: **2** thou with thy own hand didst drive out the nations (*pagans*), but them (*our fathers*) thou didst plant; thou didst afflict the peoples (*pagans*), but them (*our fathers*) thou didst set free; **3** for not by their own sword did they (*our fathers*) win the land, nor did their own arm give them victory; but thy right hand, and thy arm, and the light of thy countenance; for thou didst delight in them. **4** Thou art my King and my God, who ordainest victories for Jacob. **5** Through thee we push down our foes; through thy name we tread down our assailants. **6** For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. **7** But thou hast saved us from our foes, and hast put to confusion those who hate us. **8** In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to thy name for ever.

B NOW HE HAS REJECTED THEM.

9 Yet thou hast cast us (*Israelites*) off and abased us, and hast not gone out with our armies. **10** Thou hast made us turn back from the foe; and our enemies have gotten spoil. **11** Thou hast made us like sheep for slaughter, and hast scattered us among the nations. **12** Thou hast sold thy people for a trifle,

demanding no high price for them. **13** Thou hast made us the taunt of our neighbors, the derision and scorn of those about us. **14** Thou hast made us a byword among the nations, a laughingstock among the peoples. **15** All day long my disgrace is before me, and shame has covered my face, **16** at the words of the taunters and revilers, at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

C YET WE HAVE BEEN FAITHFUL.

17 All this has come upon us, though we have not forgotten thee, or been false to thy (*Mosaic*) covenant. **18** Our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps departed from thy way, **19** that thou shouldst have broken us in the place of jackals, and covered us with deep darkness. **20** If we had forgotten the name of our God, or spread forth our hands to a strange god, **21** would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart.

D O GOD, COME TO OUR HELP!

22 Nay, for thy sake we are slain all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter. **23** Rouse thyself! Why sleepest thou, O Lord? Awake! Do not cast us off for ever! **24** Why dost thou hide thy face? Why dost thou forget our affliction and oppression? **25** For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our body cleaves to the ground. **26** Rise up, come to our help! Deliver us for the sake of thy steadfast love! (*end of Psalm 43*)

In other words, there was a time when God raised up his Catholic Church to great heights. But today it is making itself the laughing-stock of the world, to the point that one can almost be ashamed to be a Catholic. However, there are still faithful Catholics. O God, come to their help, O God, come to our help!

Kyrie eleison.