COMPASSION

Learning to Wait

by Fr. Tim Melliza, SSP

While men and women are bound by time, God lives in eternity. And what we consider a long, long time is but a wink of an eye for God. The apostle Peter said it well, “Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day” (2 Pt 3:8).

God's compassion is defined by almost two thousand years of slow revelation beginning in his covenant with Abraham and culminating in the coming of his Son. In his patient waiting to show favor to men and women (Is 30:18), God shows his compassion.

This is what Jesus teaches when he talks about the parable of the weeds among the wheat. He tells us that the world is home not only to those who are good but also to those who harbor evil in their breasts. It may even be said that there is no good man: everybody lives the mystery of evil and goodness in his heart. For wheat to grow and bear fruit, it needs much time. The good shines in the presence of evil, and God triumphs because he knows how to wait; he is not bound by time, deadline, or expectation.

We learn best about patient waiting not as regards others but ourselves. We wish to be good and “saintly” and are often baffled by our own mistakes and sins. We even believe that we are exempt from the failings of others. Paradoxically, big mistakes and failings could lead us to the first real step to sanctity. We recognize that we are also fields on which the enemy had sown weed. Having learned about our own imperfections, we accept the need to wait patiently as we learn to traverse the path to righteousness.

God who is the author of all goodness, the wheat sown in our hearts, can act only after we recognize that we have to put our trust in him—indeed, to trust God more than any human being, even us. Christian maturity and growth actually start with a feeling of helplessness when faced with our own limitations and sinfulness. We focus neither on the good we are capable of nor on the sins we have committed but on the power of God who alone can protect us from our presumptions to self-righteousness.

When we learn to be patient with ourselves, we can also be patient with others. We refrain from making judgments. We look and observe others without comparing ourselves with them. Confronted with faults and shortcomings, we do not get easily scandalized. We pray for those who err instead of gossiping about their perceived infirmities. We wait patiently, imitating God in his compassionate waiting, secure in the knowledge that the great harvest will come at the prescribed time.

PASTORAL CATECHESIS FOR THE YEAR OF ECUMENISM, INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Message for All Asia’s Peoples

Fr. James H. Kroeger, MM

The longest papal visit to the Philippines occurred on February 17-22, 1981. While in the country, John Paul II delivered twenty-eight addresses, traveled thousands of miles, and conquered millions of hearts. His address to Asia’s peoples on February 21 in Manila reached millions through Radio Veritas; a central theme focused on many aspects of faith and dialogue. His words are truly inspirational.

“It is with great joy that I have come to Asia for my first visit. ... My journey is meant to be a journey of brotherhood, in fulfillment of a mission that is entirely religious. ... I am happy to send from Manila a message of hope to all the peoples of Asia ... I have come to Asia to be a witness to the Spirit who is active in the history of peoples and of nations.”

“Coming to the peoples of Asia ... I encounter today, in the same way, the local heritage and the ancient cultures that contain praiseworthy elements of spiritual growth, indicating the paths of life and conduct that are so often so near to those found in the Gospel of Christ. Different religions have tried to respond to man’s search ... The Catholic Church accepts the truth and goodness found in these religions.”
**Gloria**

All — Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, you alone are the Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

---

**Collect**

P — Let us pray. (Pause)

Show favor, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All — Amen.

---

**Penitential Rite**

P — Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (Pause)

P — You were sent to heal the contrite heart: Lord, have mercy.

All — Lord, have mercy.

P — You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All — Christ, have mercy.

P — You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All — Lord, have mercy.

P — May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All — Amen.

---

**The Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading** (Wis 12:13, 16–19) (Str)

Salvation history is a testimony of God’s merciful and enduring love. Meditating on God’s patience and mercy, we in turn must be kind to one another.

**A reading from the Book of Wisdom**

THERE IS no god besides you who have the care of all, that you need show you have not unjustly condemned. For your might is the source of justice; your mastery over all things makes you lenient to all. For you show your might when the perfection of your power is disbelieved; and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity. But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much leniency you govern us; for power, whenever you will, attends you. And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind; and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.

—I the word of the Lord.

All — Thanks be to God.

**Responsorial Psalm** (Ps 86)

R — Lord, you are good and forgiving.

**Second Reading** (Rom 8:26–27)

We struggle with imperfection, even in prayer, but God is patiently at work in us through the Holy Spirit who helps us in our weakness.

---

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: The Spirit comes to the aid
Homily (Sit)

Profession of Faith (Stand)

All — I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(At the words that follow up to and including became man, all bow.)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P — God has sown his word in our hearts so that we may grow fruitful in your Christian discipleship. With confidence, let us call out to the Father:

R — Father, perfect us in your love.

C — May the Church become more fully conscious of her mission as evangelizers of the Word so that people may be led to renewal and conversion. We pray: (R)

C — May government leaders reject the culture of death and revenge by tempering their sense of justice with mercy and compassion. We pray: (R)

C — May family members nourish themselves with daily meditation of the Word of God and constant acts of charity. We pray: (R)

C — May our beloved dead see the light of your eternal embrace and give them sure hope of the resurrection. We pray: (R)

C — Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (pause). We pray: (R)

P — Almighty Father, help us in our weakness. Send your Spirit to strengthen us in our struggle against evil. You who live and reign for ever and ever.

All — Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Presentation of the Gifts (Stand)

P — Pray, brethren...

All — May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P — O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice brought to completion varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honor of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord. All — Amen.
Preface VI: The pledge of the eternal Passover
P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.
P — Lift up your hearts.
All — We lift them up to the Lord.
P — Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All — It is right and just.
P — It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal.

For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:
All — Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)
All — When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord’s Prayer
All — Our Father...
P — Deliver us, Lord...
All — For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion (Kneel)
P — Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.
All — Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Ps 111 [110]:4-5)
The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

Prayer after Communion (Stand)
P — Let us pray. (Pause)
Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life.
Through Christ our Lord.
All — Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P — The Lord be with you.
All — And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People
(Pause)
P — Bow down for the blessing.
May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.
All — Amen.
May he free you always from every distress and confirm your hearts in his love.
All — Amen.

So that on this life’s journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.
All — Amen.
P — And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All — Amen.

Dismissal
P — Go forth, the Mass is ended.
All — Thanks be to God.