

9th Sunday of the Year A

*Let these words of mine remain
in your heart and in your soul. (Dt 11:18)*



First Reading

Deuteronomy 11:18.26-28

Moses said to the people: "Let these words of mine remain in your heart and in your soul; fasten them on your hand as a sign and on your forehead as a circlet.

See, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord our God that I enjoin on you today; a curse, if you disobey the commandments of the Lord your God and leave the way I have marked out for you today, by going after other gods you have not known."

Second Reading

Romans 3:21-25.28

God's justice that was made known through the Law and the Prophets has now been revealed outside the Law, since it is the same justice of God that comes through faith to everyone, Jew and pagan alike, who believes in Jesus Christ. Both Jew and pagan sinned and forfeited God's glory, and both are justified through the free gift of his grace by being redeemed in Christ Jesus who was appointed by God to sacrifice his life so as to win reconciliation through faith since, as we see it, a man is justified by faith and not by doing something the Law tells him to do.

Jesus said to his disciples: "It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord', who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. When the day comes many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, work many miracles in your name?' Then I shall tell them to their faces: I have never known you; away from me, you evil men! Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!"

Meditation

The world is full of people with nice words. They dazzle others, substituting big words for actions. Yet action is often more convincing than verbiage. In a commanding tone, Jesus denounces religious orators whose rhetoric is not verified in authentic concern and effective action. Jesus advises all those who desire a true happiness to put their faith into practice. Otherwise they build on sand.

Jesus did not content himself with words. Matthew pairs Jesus' discourses with actions which confirm his preaching. The ultimate testimony which Jesus gives to God's love for the world is the free surrender of his life. This event reveals the truth to those who grasp the language of action. Those who find security only in rhetoric and abstractions shield themselves from the biting demand made by Jesus on the cross. Let us put an end to the ineffective word! Let us take care of the wounded along the road. Let us open our arms to the prodigal. Let us welcome the stranger. These are the fruits of conversion by which we will be judged. We have done much talking in the Church since Vatican II. Now, God and the world are awaiting our action. We re-acquire the art of Christian living, a language of signs and behaviour consistent with theory.