



Apostles for Today

Reflection and prayer - March 2011

St Vincent Pallotti – “God, the Infinite Love”

On the obligation to become perfect since we are living images of God who is Purity in Essence - Meditation XVIII

Invocation of the Holy Spirit (with this prayer or with a song)

1 – Fill me o Lord with your grace, I want to serve my brothers and sisters better!
May your Spirit be present in me so that I may walk in your love!

Fill me, fill me o Lord, fill me o Lord with your love.

2 – Grant that in my life I may seek holiness following the inspiration and the example of Jesus. In faith, in hope and in love, may I contribute to true freedom.

Let us pray together

“My God, my Jesus, I intend to love you for all eternity, in each and every moment, with all the love that has existed, that exists and that will exist, with all the love that could and should exist in time and in eternity and with all of your infinite love. Amen”.

REFLECTION

Dear brothers and sisters, the topic that we will reflect on today as part of the series of reflections on God, Infinite Love, brings us to contemplate the greatness of our God before whom Vincent Pallotti was enthralled by the true purity of the Holy Trinity, and he invites us to be this LIVING IMAGE, as created by God.

Fr. Vincent reflected often on purity as a virtue of the Christian life and one that we are called to live, we can see this from his writings. For instance in his “Months of May” he reflects on the Beatitude – “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” (Mt 5,8), and he exhorts all, lay persons, consecrated religious and priests to live this beatitude fully and in accordance with the purity and modesty with which Jesus lived his life and which characterized him in his public ministry.

In the book the “Month of May” for priests he urges his fellow priests to:

“Love holy purity:

let the thoughts of your mind be pure,
purity in your words,
in all you do,
in the affections of your heart,
purity in eating, in drinking, in rest.
Purity in everything, purity, purity!
Remember that God fills all things with his immensity,
and consequently, I tell you in order that you understand:
you are always immersed in God and thus are immersed in purity
itself.” (OCCC XIII, 431)

May your thoughts be pure, your words be pure, your actions be pure,
purity in the affections of your heart, purity in the manner you feed
yourself, in what you drink, in your repose. In everything, purity.

In effect the virtue of purity has a dimension which goes beyond all that is
strictly related to observing the 6th and 9th Commandments, which
mention it specifically. Purity in its wider sense is an attitude that is
contrary to deceit, to falsehood, to duplicity in day to day relationships
which would all seem to be typical of what a large part of society in
submerged in, and we are invited to let transparency shine in the midst of
this. Transparent attitudes similar to those of a child which are pure.
Purity in the broad sense is to live and to act transparently.

Attentively we follow St. Vincent’s reflections in meditation number XVIII:

A – I recall, in the light of faith, that God, in his infinite mercy and infinite
love has created me in his image and likeness; my soul is therefore a living
image of purity itself because God is purity in essence. By reason of
creation, I am, aided by his grace, obliged to use my free will in order to
better myself since I am a living image of purity in its essence.

B – Therefore at all times and in everything I should aim at purity in itself
and use whatever means there are to live a life of purity in body and in
spirit.

C – In order to achieve this I will use the powerful weapon of prayer, vocal
and mental, I will strive to banish any impure thoughts from my mind and
impure affections from my heart. I will fortify myself by receiving the

sacraments frequently so that I may overcome temptations and restrain my passions.

D – I should diligently keep in check the feelings of my body and of my spirit, avoiding dangers, occasions and the conversations of persons which would put me in danger of losing the loveliness of purity of body and of spirit.

E – In order to grow in perfection in holy purity, I must live and act in such a way that I mortify my flesh and my vices, so that I can say that :

All my thoughts are purity; all the affections of my heart are pure; the words, deeds and my life's conduct are pure because I am, through divine mercy, a living image of purity in its essence. By acting differently I would be going against the nature of my soul, which is a living image of Purity in its essence.

Having listened to the wise teaching of our Founder, let us observe a time of silence and read over the text again to notice what God may be calling our attention to.

SILENCE

Now let us sing or pray with Psalm 67 that we and all people may receive God's mercy which helps us to live as his beloved children created in his image and likeness.

May God show kindness and bless us,
and make his face smile on us!

For then the earth will acknowledge your ways
and all the nations will know of your power to save.

***R. Let the nations praise you, O God,
let all the nations praise you!***

Let the nations shout and sing for joy,
since you dispense true justice to the world;
You dispense strict justice to the peoples,
on earth you rule the nations.

***R. Let the nations praise you, O God,
let all the nations praise you!***

The soil has given its harvest,

God, our God, has blessed us.
May God bless us, and let him be feared
to the very ends of the earth.

Oh my God, purity in essence, immense and incomprehensible purity!
I blush to stand in your presence. How unappreciative I have been, how
ungrateful for your infinite love and mercy. Although you had foreseen
that I would be ungrateful, that I would go against your love in my manner
of acting, you deigned to create me in your image and likeness, which is
purity in essence.

In your infinite mercy help me to always pray to you like this:
My God, my Father, infinite love of my soul. It is true that I am ungrateful
for your grace and your gifts. I have acted in opposition to the holy
projects of your infinite love and mercy with which you created me and
which surround me. My soul has been deformed as it houses impurities
and my life is far from the sublime purity which it could and should be by
creation and by grace.

But, will you forsake me because of this? Will you punish me as I deserve? Oh
my God, I know that according to justice I do not deserve much, but you are
purity by nature and infinitely merciful, and through the merits of our Lord
Jesus Christ and the merits and intercession of Mary and of all the angels and
saints, I firmly believe and am certain that you will grant me perfect
contrition for all my sins!

I trust and have confidence that you will destroy all that which is impure in
me and you will grant me your purity and the grace to profit always by the
gift of free will in order to use all the necessary and useful to better my soul
because it is a living image of your purity. Amen.

For reflection in groups or individually: what are the 'means' that might help
us to live "purity in essence"?

OFFERING

Eternal Father, in union with the most sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I
offer you the most precious blood of the Immaculate Lamb, our divine
Redeemer, in thanksgiving, as if you had already granted all the graces I have
requested for my and for all, now and always. Amen.