OFFERING GOD THE LITTLE WE HAVE

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Beloved in Christ the Lord, we hear today, on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, that the Savior goes up the mountain with His apostles, and in this way reminds us where we are heading. For it was precisely for this that the Lord Jesus became man and took on human nature: to lead us to heaven, so that with the help of God's grace we would raise our hearts and our minds to heaven, so that all the sheep of God's flock would reach, at the end of their lives, the kingdom of heaven.

Dear faithful, when Christ goes up the mountain, lifts up His eyes and sees that a great multitude is coming to Him, He then turns to the apostle Philip with the question: "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" And let us note that the evangelist points out that Jesus asks His disciple this question in order to test his faith. He Himself knew perfectly well what He was going to do. And so Philip, seeing such great crowds, is unable to imagine what could be done in this situation.

And at this moment the apostle Andrew, evidently endowed with greater trust, turns to the Redeemer with a request. He points out that he has found something, that there is a little boy who has brought something with him. Perhaps he had already begun to share it with those who were faint from weariness, who were hungry. "There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many?" And this rhetorical question of Saint Andrew is at the same time a cry to the Lord Jesus, that He might make a miracle of this little bit, that this little bit might suffice to feed 5000 men. One may say that the Lord Jesus performs today this miracle of the multiplication of the bread in response to the faith, to the request of Saint Andrew the Apostle, who gives the Savior everything he has, everything he found, though it is so little.

Dear faithful, this scene from the Gospel, which holy Church places before our eyes on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, is for us a very instructive lesson, for here we can recognize two great dangers that lie in wait for us in our spiritual life, our Catholic life. Two great dangers, two traps that Satan sets in order to lead us to doubt, to spiritual resignation, and perhaps even to push us into the arms of spiritual despair.

"NOTHING WORTH OFFERING"

First, my dear ones, this resignation of ours, this sadness, this despair in the face of life's difficulties, in the face of the winds that shake the world and holy Church, can stem from our egoism, from our self-love, which tells us: "You have nothing that you could offer to God. What you have is worth nothing. So why begin anything at all?" My beloved, so often when we pray, when we ask God for help, we doubt whether our prayers deserve to be heard. So often we prefer to do nothing rather than expose ourselves to some effort, rather than admit that we are capable of so little, that we have so little, that we are such dust, such miserable ashes. So often we prefer to complain, to grumble, to leave everything as it is, because we do not have enough courage, because we do not have enough trust to offer the Savior the little that we have, the dust that we are. How often, like the apostle Philip, we are so absorbed in temporal cares that we do not even try to think what we could draw out of our life and offer to God.

And yet the Savior does not demand impossible things of us. The Savior calls us to offer Him what we have, what we are. Dear faithful, so the first lesson that we ought to draw from today's Gospel is this: instead of lamenting, complaining, grumbling that we lack so much, instead of complaining about our lot, about the conduct of our neighbors, let us offer Christ what we have, who we are. Let us offer that little bit which in our eyes, in the eyes of a proud man, is nothing, but in the eyes of God can be a treasure.

Let us find time to raise our thoughts to God as often as possible during the day. That is the definition of prayer: prayer is the raising of the mind to God. An ejaculatory prayer, a short sigh. This Catholic prayer, my dear ones, is not only the morning and evening prayers, but in every hour you will find a few seconds to sigh up to heaven. O my Jesus, mercy. Most Holy

Mother, help me. Jesus, I love You. Be praised, Most Holy Trinity. Saint Joseph, holy patrons, help me.

Let us find time to prepare for the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, and after it ends to thank the Lord Jesus for making present on the altar His sacrifice of Good Friday, for feeding us with His Most Holy Body. Let us find time to read good Catholic books, to meditate on the mysteries of the holy Rosary. Let us find time to talk with another person who perhaps is going through doubt and needs good advice today, who perhaps has gone astray and needs instruction, who perhaps is troubled and needs someone to console him, to wipe the tear flowing down his cheek. Let us find time to help one another in household duties, in the family, to visit the sick, to pray for our loved ones, the living as well as the dead. Let us patiently bear wrongs, willingly forgive offenses, do penance for our sins. So little in our human eyes, this little bit that we can offer to God.

If we do all this, my dear ones, if we learn to offer to the Most Sacred Heart of the Lord Jesus the little that we possess, then we shall see and be amazed. Just as the apostles were once amazed when from five barley loaves they filled twelve baskets with the fragments left over by those who had eaten. And in the same way we too shall be amazed when we see how Christ, through His grace, from this nothing, from this little bit that we offer Him, is able to make something great. By His grace He transforms our hearts, our families, our nation.

DOUBT IN GOD'S GRACE

Dear faithful, and the second lesson flowing from today's Gospel. The second danger, the second trap into which Satan wants to drive us, is doubt in the power of God's grace. Doubt that God desires our good. God desires the good of every man and desires that every man should know Him, love Him and serve Him, for God is the highest good. And God through His grace moves men to seek the truth. He who seeks the truth will reach the true God, the one Savior of every man, our Lord Jesus Christ.

But, my dear ones, we Catholics, even when we would already be able to draw something out of our life, to offer something to the Lord Jesus, fall into this second trap, into this thought: surely God is not able to do anything with it. Surely God cannot bring anything great out of this little bit. We Catholics, my dear ones, have completely lost faith in the power of God's grace, in the power of the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in the power of the holy sacraments. And we began to despise all of it. That is why God took away those treasures from our fathers and grandfathers, who despised the treasures entrusted to holy Church. He allowed the Most Holy Sacrifice to be driven out of Catholic churches, so that it would no longer be offered on the altars that were built precisely for the purpose of giving worship to the one God in the Holy Trinity.

POWER OF THE MASS

We Catholics completely do not believe, do not understand, what power the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass has. The Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, which has after all transformed the face of this world. A great son of holy Church, the missionary Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, described this power, this action of the Holy Mass, which he saw with his own eyes in Africa, in the following words: "I knew, to be sure, from the time of my studies, what this great mystery of our faith means, but I had not yet come to know its whole value, its whole strength, its efficacy, its whole depth. This I lived through then in Africa day after day, especially in Gabon, where I spent 13 years of my missionary life. First in the seminary, and then in the bush among the native Africans. There I truly saw what the grace of the Holy Mass can accomplish. I saw it in those formerly pagan souls that had been transformed by the grace of baptism, by the grace of taking part in the Holy Mass, by the Most Holy Eucharist. Those souls understood the mystery of the sacrifice of the Cross and united themselves with our Lord Jesus Christ in the sufferings of His Cross. They offered their sacrifices and their sufferings to our Lord Jesus Christ and lived as Christians. These are people whom the grace of the Holy Mass enriched, who every day took part in the Holy Mass, who with fervor received Holy Communion and who became models and signposts for those around them. I saw with my own eyes how these entirely pagan villages became Christian and changed

not only spiritually and in the supernatural sense, but also physically, socially, economically, politically. Because these people, who until then had been pagans, suddenly realized that it is necessary to keep agreements, to fulfill one's obligations, especially marital obligations, despite the renunciations this entails. And so the village changed gradually under the influence of grace, under the influence of the grace of the sacrifice of the Holy Mass."

And what Archbishop Lefebvre saw in Africa, after all, happened also on our Polish soil, more than 1000 years ago, when the first Cross of Christ was set up here. The Holy Mass transformed the face of this land. The Holy Mass brought down into the world the graces needed to transform man. A Catholic, my dear ones, a believing Catholic, a Catholic living in sanctifying grace, is raised up spiritually to the heavens. He in whose heart God Himself lives, who abides in sanctifying grace, already here on earth becomes a citizen of heaven. The grace of the Holy Mass transformed this world, and transformed our homeland too.

And we see, my dear ones, what happens when this grace fades, when the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass was abolished, when it was replaced by a protestantized, judaized feast. The lack of God's grace, a return to paganism, savagery. People become base again, worse than pagans.

BELIEVING IN GOD'S GRACE

And, my dear ones, we must believe anew in the power of God's grace, in the fact that from this little bit that we can offer to God, from this nothing in human terms, God has the power to bring forth, to create something great, to transform us, our families, our nation, the whole world. As long as the Most Holy Sacrifice does not return to Catholic altars, to Catholic churches built for the worship of the Most Holy Trinity, for so long this world will sink into ever deeper darkness.

It is given to us, my beloved, to know the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, and with what devotion, with what love we ought to approach this treasure of our faith. When we realize that here is the source of grace, that here God gives the power to transform our hearts, our families, our nation, the whole world. What happened 1000 years ago in Poland, what Archbishop Lefebvre saw with his own eyes in Africa, can surely happen again, as soon as people begin to offer to God what they have, who they are, this little bit. And when they believe, when they want to cooperate with God's grace, we can once again become witnesses of the Christianization of Poland, which is today turning pagan. We shall become witnesses of what Archbishop Lefebvre saw with his own eyes. Just as pagan villages once became Christian, so too our increasingly pagan Polish cities, towns and villages can become Christian again, and we can see how they will change, not only spiritually and in the supernatural sense, but also physically, socially, economically, politically.

But do we Catholics, Catholics of Tradition, living in the twentieth century, still believe in the power of God's grace, in the power of the Most Holy Sacrifice? Are we ready to offer anything to God, to bring Him what we are and to ask Him to transform this wretchedness of our life?

Dear faithful, on this Fourth Sunday of Lent, half of Lent is already behind us. Let us ask fervently that we may believe in the power of God's grace, which we receive through the holy sacraments, in particular through the sacrament of the altar, the Most Holy Sacrament, for today it is He who restored sight to the blind, He who restored hearing to the deaf and speech to the dumb, He who healed the paralyzed and the lepers and freed the possessed from the claws of the evil spirit, He who fed 5000 men with five loaves, who addresses to each of us the words He addressed to Saint Paul the Apostle: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in weakness."

Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Praised be Jesus Christ.