

Thirteenth Meditation: That as a teacher you must give an account to God on the way you have done your work

First Point

You cooperate with God in his work says Saint Paul, and the souls of the children whom you teach are the field that he cultivates through you. Since he is the One who has given you the ministry you exercise, when all of you appear before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ, each will give his own account to God of what he has done as a minister of God and as a dispenser of his mysteries for children.

Jesus Christ, having been appointed by God to be your judge will say to you as the owner said to his manager, Give me an account of your administration. He will then look into the very depths of your heart to examine whether you have been faithful managers of the wealth he has entrusted to you and of the talents which he has given you to work in his service. The good or bad use you have made of those gifts will then become clear, for the Lord who judges you will unveil what is most hidden and most secret in the depths of your hearts.

If you want to prevent the account which you must give from becoming heavier with the passage of time, make it everyday to yourself. Examine before God how you are conducting yourself in your work and whether you are failing in any of your duties.

Come to see yourself clearly. Find fault with yourself accurately, unsparingly, so that when Jesus Christ comes to judge you, you will be able to face his judgment without being afraid. For when he comes he will find nothing to condemn in you, because you will have anticipated his judgment not only regarding your own person but also regarding the talents and graces you have received from God to fulfill well the service that he himself gave you.

For he has made you the guardians and guides of children who belong to him, over whom he has acquired the right of father not only by creation but also by holy baptism, whereby they are all consecrated to him.

Second Point

Consider that the account you will have to give to God will not be inconsequential, because it concerns the salvation of the souls of children whom God has entrusted to your care, for on the day of judgment, you will answer for them as much as for yourself.

You must be convinced of this, that God will begin by making you give an account of their souls before making you give an account of your own. For when you took responsibility for them, you committed yourself at the same time to procure their salvation with as much diligence as your own, for you engaged yourself to work entirely for the salvation of their souls.

This is what Saint Paul brings to your attention, when he says that those who have been put in charge of others must render an account of them to God. He does not say that they will render an account of their own souls, but of the souls of those for whom they are responsible and it is over those souls that they must watch because they are obliged to render an account to God for them.

The basic reason for this is, that when they carry out well the service of guides and leaders of the souls entrusted to them, they fulfill at the same time their own duties before God. God will fill them with so much grace that they themselves will be made holy while they are contributing as far as they are able to the salvation of others.

Have you up to the present looked upon the salvation of your students as your personal responsibility during the whole time that they are under your guidance? You have exercises which are arranged for your own sanctification, but if you have an ardent zeal for the salvation of those whom you are called to instruct, you will not fail to perform them and to relate them to this intention. In doing this you will draw on your students the graces needed to contribute to their salvation, and you can be assured that if you act this way for their salvation, God himself will take responsibility for yours. Take on this spirit for the future.

Third Point

In making you responsible for the instruction of children and their formation in piety, Jesus Christ entrusted to you the task of building up his body which is the Church. You are likewise responsible, as far as you are able, to make her holy, and to purify her by the word of life, so that she may be able to appear before him full of glory without stain, without wrinkle, and without any defect, but completely pure and completely beautiful. It is for this that he wants you to give him an exact account when he calls for it, for he holds this responsibility very much at heart, having loved his Church so much that he gave himself up for her.

Since children are the most innocent part of the Church, and usually the best disposed to receive the impressions of grace, Jesus Christ desires that you fulfill so well your task of making them holy, that all of them will come to the age of the perfect man and the fullness of Jesus Christ, so that they are no longer like children tossed here and there, no longer turned around by every wind of doctrine, by deceit, and trickery, whether through the companions with whom they associate or men leading them into falsehood by their evil proposals.

Rather, in all things they are growing up in Jesus Christ, who is their head, through whom the whole body of the Church holds its structure and its union, so that they may always be so united with the Church and in her that, by the hidden power which Jesus Christ furnishes to all his members, they will share in the promises of God in Jesus Christ.

Put yourself, then, in the position to be able, when he questions you, to tell him that you have acquitted yourself well of all these duties. Be assured that the best way to do this and to be pleasing to Jesus Christ, when he judges you, will be to present to him all those children you have instructed as part of the building of the Church and have brought by your care into its structure to become the sanctuary where God dwells by the Holy Spirit.

This is how you will show Jesus Christ that you have truly fulfilled your ministry and that you have worked effectively to build up and sustain the Church, as Jesus Christ has engaged you to do.