

## ROGATION MONDAY

We are bound to pray for those whom  
we are charged to teach

### 37.1 First Point

In today's Gospel Jesus Christ presents a parable that lets you know the duty you have to be concerned about the needs of those whom you instruct. It is as if one of you, he says, goes at midnight to find one of your friends and tells him, "Lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has just arrived at my house, and I have nothing to give him."<sup>251</sup>

In his explanation of this parable Saint Augustine says that this traveling friend is someone who has walked the way of sin, seeking to satisfy passion in the world, and finding there nothing but vice and vanity, misery and disappointment, turns to you in distress, looking for help and is persuaded that you have received the grace to support the weak, to teach the ignorant, to correct the wayward.<sup>252</sup> Your friend comes to you like the weary and exhausted traveler, and he begs you to help him in his destitution.

Such is the plight of those whom Providence calls upon you to teach, whom you must train in piety. It is God himself who has led them to you; it is God who makes you responsible for their salvation<sup>253</sup> and who gives you responsibility to provide for all their spiritual needs. To do this should be your constant effort.

### 37.2 Second Point

The children who come to you either have not had any instruction, or have been taught the wrong things, or, if they have received some good lessons, bad companions or their own bad habits have prevented them from benefiting. God sends them to you so that you may give them the spirit of Christianity and educate them according to the maxims of the Gospel.

You are obliged, says Saint Augustine, to learn these things yourself; you have reason to be ashamed if you have to teach these children what you do not know yourself or exhort them to practice what you do not do yourself. Ask God, then, for what you lack and to give you what you need in full measure, namely, the Christian spirit and deep religious convictions.

Those who come to you do so in the middle of the night,<sup>254</sup> which, says Saint Augustine, symbolizes their great ignorance. Their need is pressing, and you have nothing to satisfy their need. Your simple faith in the mysteries may be enough for you yourself, but not enough if you are to be able to give them what they need. Will you then abandon them and leave them without any instruction? Have recourse to God, knock on the door, pray, beg him insistently and even importunately.<sup>255</sup>

The three loaves which you should ask for, continues the same Father, represent knowledge of the three Divine Persons. If you obtain this from God, you will have what will satisfy those who come to you in their need for instruction.

### **37.3 Third Point**

You should look upon the children whom you are charged to teach as poor, abandoned orphans. In fact, though the majority of them do have a father here on earth, they are still as if they had none and are abandoned to themselves for the salvation of their souls. This is the reason God places them as if under your guardianship.

He looks on them with compassion and takes care of them as being their protector, their support and their father,<sup>256</sup> and it is to you that he entrusts this care. This God of goodness places them in your hands and undertakes to give them everything you ask of him for them: piety, self-control, reserve, purity, the avoidance of companions who could be dangerous to them.

And because God knows that of yourself you have neither enough virtue nor enough ability to give all these things to the children he has entrusted to you, he wants you to ask him for these blessings for them frequently, fervently, and insistently. In this way, thanks to your care, nothing will be lacking to them that they need for their salvation.

251 Lk 11:5-6  
252 1 Thes 5:14  
253 Heb 13-17  
254 Lk 11:5  
255 Lk 11:9  
256 Ps 68:6