



19 MAY

BLESSED RAPHAËL-LOUIS RAFIRINGA

Religious
(1856-1919)

*In Madagascar: Memoria
Institute: Memoria ad libitum*

Brother Raphael was an authentic champion of the Catholic Faith in Madagascar.

He belonged to what might have been called the middle-class of the time in Madagascar, in service to the royal family. He was born in 1856 and certainly had attractive prospects ahead of him. But God's plans and the young man's choices pointed in a different direction.

He was the first student of the Brothers in that country. He was endowed with a brilliant intelligence and a strong will, both of which helped him challenge his family's ambitions for him and become a disciple of those dedicated missionaries admittedly somewhat unusual who had arrived in the Island a little earlier.

Brother Raphael-Louis matured quickly and grew culturally, religiously and humanly. He was to show his character as a teacher, a translator of Malagasy works into French works, and a writer of textbooks in this work he was tireless. But a time came when, following riots and agitation for independence that rocked the Island, all foreign missionaries were expelled and Brother found himself elected *vox populi* as leader of the Island's Catholics. This was an unexpected role, and it turned out to be incontrovertible proof of his uncommon abilities: forming catechists, organizing meetings, gatherings and paraliturgies in all parts of the Island, composing pamphlets and compendia of Catholic doctrine, as well as writing hymns and poems. His influence was evidenced by the fact that when after three years' absence foreign missionaries were allowed to return, they found with amazement that the Catholic communities were quite numerous and that the people had as much fervor as when they had left them.

In recognition of his literary output, when the Academy of Madagascar was created in 1902 Brother Raphael was immediately named as a member, and his portrait is part of the gallery of eminent citizens of the great Island.

He died at Fianarantsoa on the coast on May 19th 1919. His remains were translated to Antananarivo in 1933. He was beatified on June 7th, 2009 and the ceremony was attended by an enormous number of people

MASS

Common of Saints: for a religious

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Isa 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one bringing good news, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation.

OPENING PRAYER (COLLECT)

O God, who made blessed Raphael
an admirable guide of the brothers
in the way of faith and love,
may we also, following his example and through his intercession,
walk as children of the light
willing always to serve our brothers and sisters
Through Christ our Lord.

FIRST READING

Isa 52:7-10

All the ends of the earth can see the salvation of our God.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one bringing good news, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, saying to Zion, "Your God is King!" Listen! Your sentinels raise a cry, together they shout for joy,

For they see directly, before their eyes, the Lord's return to Zion. Break out together in song, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the Lord has comforted his people, has redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord has bared his holy arm in the sight of all the nations; All the ends of the earth can see the salvation of our God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 95

R/. Your salvation, O Lord, is for all peoples.

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, bless his name.

Proclaim his salvation day after day.
Tell his glory among the nations;
among all peoples, his marvelous deeds.

Give to the Lord, you families of nations,

give to the Lord glory and might;
give to the Lord the glory due his name!

Declare among the nations: The Lord is king.
The world will surely stand fast, never to be shaken.
He rules the peoples with fairness

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 28: 19-20

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Mt 28: 16-20

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.

A reading from the gospel according to Matthew

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Regard with kindness, O Lord, our offering, so that the mystery that we celebrate may free us from all sin and make us holy for your service. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Mk 16: 15; Mt 28: 20

He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the participation in your sacraments, O Lord God nourish in us the faith that the apostles have passed on and that Blessed Rafael Louis Rafiringa also served with loving dedication.

Through Christ our Lord.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Common of Saints: for a religious

OFFICE OF READINGS

SECOND READING

A reading from the Homilies of St John Chrysostom on St Matthew's Gospel.

(Hom. 59: PG 58, 580. 584)

We should take care of our children's good

When the Lord, speaking of children, says: *Their angels always behold the face of my Father, and for this I came, and this is my Father's will*, he made those responsible for them take their task more seriously.

See what a protective wall he puts around them. He holds out the threat of fatal punishment for those who cause them to fall. To those who serve them and take care of them, following his example and that of his Father, he promises great blessings. Let us follow that example, let us never refuse to undertake what may seem tedious or beneath us, for the sake of our brothers. However insignificant and worthless is the one whom we are to serve, however laborious is the work involved, even if we have to cross mountains and precipices, let us put up with everything to save our brothers. God has such an eager care for the soul that he did not spare his own Son. And so, from the moment we leave our homes in the morning we must have as our one objective and chief preoccupation to save those in spiritual danger.

Nothing is worth as much as the soul: *What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his own soul ?* The love of money corrupts and degrades everything. Once it invades souls, like a tyrant invading a citadel, it casts out the fear of God. And so we neglect our children's salvation and our own; we have only one aim, to become richer and leave our wealth to others, who will pass it on to their descendants, who in their turn will pass it on to others after them ; in fact we become mere transmitters of our own money and possessions, but not masters of them.

An absurd consequence follows : free men are of less worth than slaves. For we set a value on slaves, if not as persons, at least for their usefulness to us ; but free men do not enjoy even this consideration ; they are of less value in our estimation than these slaves.

Why do I say this? Because children are less valued than cattle ; because we take greater care of horses or donkeys than we do of children. If a man has a mule, he is very concerned to have the best driver and not one who is reckless or a thief or a drunkard or incompetent. But if we have to appoint a tutor to care for a child's soul, we accept quite at random the first fellow who comes along. Yet there is no greater art than this.

What can equal the work of training the soul, of forming the young mind ? The man who has this art must be more painstaking than any painter or sculptor.

But we take no account of this ; we are concerned only to provide him with a training in language, and once again it is the acquisition of money that prompts us. He is taught how to speak,

not in view of communication, but in order to make money. Indeed if it were possible to become rich even without this, we should pay no attention to it.

See the great tyranny of money : it has seized control of all things ; it has bound them like a gang of slaves or beasts and pulls them wherever it wants.

But what do we gain from making accusations against it ? We can only attack it with words, but it defeats us in action. Despite this, we shall not stop attacking it with our words. If any progress is made, we shall both gain, you and we ; but if you remain simply as you are, we at least have fulfilled all our duty.

May God cure you of this disease and so give us something to be proud of in you. To him be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

RESPONSORY

Mk 16: 15; Jn 3: 5

R/. Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. * Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.

V/. No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

PRAYER

O God, who made blessed Raphael
an admirable guide of the brothers
in the way of faith and love,
may we also, following his example and through his intercession,
walk as children of the light
willing always to serve our brothers and sisters
Through Christ our Lord.

MORNING PRAYER

Ant. Ben. Only the person who loves can teach and guide disciples just as the good shepherd does.
(T.P. Alleluia)

INTERCESSIONS

R/. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Intentions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

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an admirable guide of the brothers
in the way of faith and love,

may we also, following his example and through his intercession,
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willing always to serve our brothers and sisters
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EVENING PRAYER

Ant. Magn. Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you
did for me. (T.P. Alleluia)

INTERCESSIONS

R/. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Intentions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

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