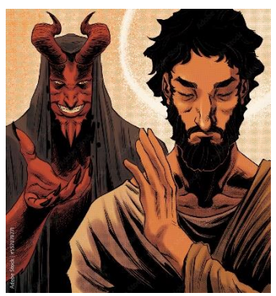
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time — January 28, 2024

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

If you remember the movie "The Exorcist", there was a scene wherein those who endeavored to expel the evil spirit failed utterly at first, no matter what they tried, and only seem to succeed through a tragic turn of events. How different with the Lord: with one word he commands the evil spirit and it instantly obeys. There are no wild gestures, no shouting, no long-drawn-out prayers. Just a word, a command, and Jesus is master of the situation. What a contrast!

Why did Jesus drive out demons, cure all manner of diseases, and raise the dead to life? Was it always in the first place to prove his divine mission? If that were so, why should he refuse the Pharisee when they demanded a sign? Why lose himself in the crowd as soon as the miracle had been wrought? Why impose secrecy on those he had cured? No, the main purpose of his miracles was not to offer credentials for his divine mission. They were primarily intended as the means to establish the reign of God among humankind.

At the very outset, Jesus had proclaimed that the reign of God was at hand. By the word and deed, he had set about establishing it. He himself was the embodiment of its perfect realization, he who, full of the Spirit of God, was the perfect image of divine Love. But there was one great adversary to God's plan for humankind: Satan, whose influence over mankind from the very beginning had been disastrous. From those earliest times, mankind had come more and more under Satan's sway, and Satan was not going to give up his domain without a mighty struggle. So, Jesus, met him head on at the beginning of the public ministry in the forty days in the desert. He met the Adversary and came forth victorious.



From then on, his ministry was greatly taken up with driving out demons. If he is to establish the reign of God, he must first of all dethrone Satan from his hold on humankind, in order to enthrone instead in the heart of humankind the God of love. He knew that he was dealing with an archenemy of great acumen and malice, who would concentrate all his forces before yielding his domain. But he was also aware that he, Christ was the Stronger One.

There is still much to be done. The forces of evil grow apace day by day. Yet in the same Spirit of Christ, which each has received at baptism, and in whom so many are renewing themselves today, the members of Christ can carry on the work of the Master.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**January 30**	**11:00AM**
Shirley Junio †		Buenaflor- Roth Family
Wed.	**January 31**	**11:00AM**
Carmen McFarling †		ICF #14
Thur.	**February 1**	**11:00AM**
Rogelio & Nenita Arcega (Anniversary)		
Fri.	**February 2**	**11:00AM**
Patrick McBride (conversion & healing)		Lydia
Sat.	**February 3**	**4:30PM**
Linda Benish†		Buenaflor-Roth Family
Sun.	**February 4**	**9AM**
Paolo Coccé		Stella
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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