



Fr Jerome's Reflection

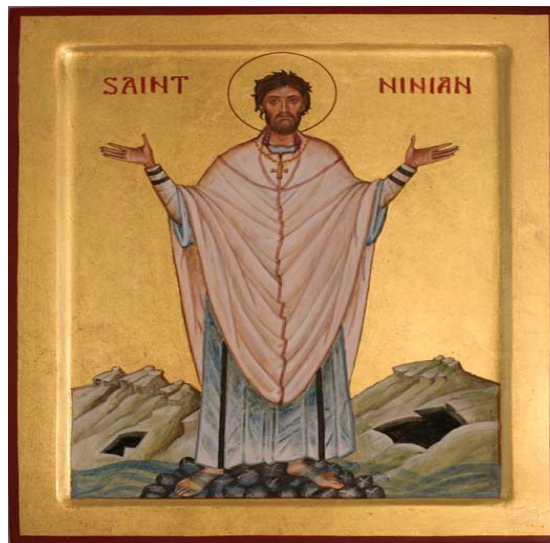
Wednesday in Ordinary Time

16 September 2020

Readings: 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13, Psalm 33:1-12, Luke 7:31-35

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**Feast Day, 16 September: Ninian, Bishop and Missionary in Scotland, 432**



One of the great missionaries and early Saints of the British Isles, he was born in Britain around the year 360. Though Britain was still mostly pagan, Ninian was born of Christian parents. He travelled to Rome as a young man, and spent several years there engaged in study and ascetic struggle. He was ordained in Rome and sent back as a missionary to Britain around the year 400. On the way he probably met St Martin of Tours: many of the churches he founded, including his cathedral in Whithorn, were named in honour of St Martin. He established several monasteries, ministered to his Christian Briton countrymen and converted many more Britons to the Faith. He also converted many of the fierce Picts, inhabitants of today's Scotland, to faith in Christ. He died c. 432 and was buried at Whithorn.

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In today's Gospel we see the originality of the Good News which opens the way for people who are attached to ancient forms of faith who feel lost and do not understand anything more of God's action. In order to hide their lack of openness and of understanding they defend and seek childish pretexts to justify their attitude of lack of acceptance. Jesus reacts with a parable to denounce the confusion of His enemies: "You are similar to children who do not know what they want".

When something is evident and the persons, out of ignorance or because of bad will, do not perceive things and do not want to perceive them, it is good to find an evident comparison which

will reveal their incoherence and the ill will. And Jesus is a Master in finding comparisons which speak for themselves.

The comparison which Jesus finds is this one. You are like “those children, shouting to one another while they sit in the market place: we played the pipes for you, and you would not dance; we sang dirges and you would not cry!” Spoiled children, all over the world, have the same reaction. They complain when others do not do and act as they say. The reason for Jesus’ complaint is the arbitrary way with which people in the past reacted before John the Baptist and how they react now before Jesus.

Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist; He believed in him and was baptized by him. On the occasion of this Baptism in the Jordan, He had the revelation of the Father regarding His mission as Messiah-Servant (Mk 1:10). At the same time, Jesus stressed the difference between Him and John. John was more severe, more ascetical, did not eat nor drink. He remained in the desert and threatened the people with the punishment of the Last Judgment (Lk 3:7-9). Because of this, people said that he was possessed. Jesus was more welcoming; He ate and drank like everybody else. He went through the towns and entered the houses of the people; He accepted the tax collectors and the prostitutes. This is why they said that He was a glutton and a drunkard. Even considering His words regarding “the men of this generation” (Lk 7:31), in a general way, probably, Jesus had in mind the opinion of the religious authority who did not believe in Jesus (Mk 11:29-33).

The obvious conclusion to which Jesus arrives. And Jesus ends drawing this conclusion: “Yet, wisdom is justified by all her children”. The lack of seriousness and of coherence is clearly seen in the opinion given on Jesus and on John. The bad will is so evident that it needs no proof. That recalls the response of Job to his friends who believe that they are wise: “Will no one teach you to be quiet! - the only wisdom that becomes you!” (Job 13:5).

When I express my opinion on others, am I like the Pharisees and the scribes who gave their opinion on Jesus and John? They expressed only their preconceptions and said nothing on the persons whom they judged.

**Pray:**

**Holy God, please forgive me for judging others based on their personal style and demeanour. I don't want ever to reject, judge, or be unsupportive of your servants. In addition, dear Father, help my life consistently bear fruit for you. In Jesus' name. Amen.**