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alla destra: BLESSEDBRONISLAS MARKIEWICZ]

30 January

Blessed BRONISLAS MARKIEWICZ, priest

Optional memorial

Bronislas Markiewicz was born on 13 July 1842 at Pruchnik, Poland, in the present day archdiocese of Przemyśl, in which he was ordained priest on 15 September 1867. After eighteen years of zealous and fruitful service in the Archdiocese, feeling himself called to religious life, in 1885 he left for Italy and entered among the Salesians, having the joy of meeting Saint John Bosco, into whose hands, on 27 March 1887, he made his religious profession.

As a Salesian he undertook various tasks. Having returned to Poland he took up the role of parish priest at Miejsce Piastowe, in his diocese of Przemyśl. In addition to the ordinary parish activities he devoted himself to the formation of poor and orphaned youth. Along these lines he began two new religious Congregations, one male and one female which he placed under the protection of Saint Michael the Archangel, with a spirituality inspired by that of Saint John Bosco. Full of love for God and for his neighbour and acting in the spirit of the motto “work and temperance”, he dedicated his whole life to the forgotten and rejected orphans, to poor children and to youth abandoned and morally neglected.

Worn out by work, on 29 January 1912 he ended his earthly pilgrimage. Both before and after his death he was considered a saintly man. On 2 July 1994, in the presence of John Paul II, the decree on the heroicity of his virtues was promulgated. His beatification took place on 19 June 2005.

From the Common of Saints: for religious; or from the Common of pastors. Psalms of the day, from the psalter.

Office of readings

SECOND READING

From the “Writings” of Blessed Bronislas Markiewicz, priest

(Powściągliwość i praca [Temperance and work], 1904, pp. 73-74)

Two pillars of social life

The world is collapsing because men have destroyed the two pillars of social life. In education and in the life they have prevalently placed the emphasis on intellectual instruction and on knowledge, neglecting “work and temperance.” On the other hand, our Creator who knows better than us what we need, recommends, at the risk of the loss of bread and of salvation, that we work with the sweat of our brow and that we be temperate. He says expressly to our first parents in paradise: “With sweat on your brow shall you eat your bread; until you return to the soil as you were taken from it” (Gen 3,19). Jesus Christ in his Gospel adds: “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mt 16,24). This means: “Not only I your Saviour have to suffer and labour but also all of you my disciples, if you want to be with me in paradise, have to suffer and labour, submitting your intellect, your will and your actions to the prescriptions of the commandments of God.”

You have to engage you body with all its senses and inclinations in continuous divine service, fighting and working day and night for your whole life until death for his glory. “For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh” (Gal 5,17).

Work and temperance are not easily acquired. So as not to concede in the fight, it is necessary to firmly control our body and all our natural inclinations, just as a coachman firmly controls an untamed horse to prevent both going over the precipice.

The Son of Man in human flesh, walks before us with his example to lighten the burden which the Creator has placed on us and to exhort us to voluntarily deny ourselves. Jesus works willingly and with sweat on his brow in St Joseph's workshop, supports patiently the sufferings and the deprivations of daily life, and finally dies on the cross with atrocious pains. He does not spare himself, nor make any concessions in order to teach us in everything how we ought to live. Following him closely is his Mother, the Mother of Sorrows who works and suffers all her life. Following her come the thousands of Saints who "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal 5,24).

Nowadays, on the other hand, throughout the world and unfortunately also in our Christian countries one seems to hear the order of the day: "We are trying to enjoy to the full life on this earth, and to work as little as possible." Money, power, rest, entertainment, pleasure and honours nowadays constitute the ideal of the whole human race, while working with the sweat of one's brow and Christian temperance are totally despised. Only those who are forced to, work and suffer. Only very few men work freely and are temperate in the spirit of Jesus Christ. The majority of people nowadays do not know that work and Christian temperance already obtain on this earth a hundredfold. Putting aside temperance, on the other hand, produces, in addition to the risk of the eternal punishment of hell, also earthly misfortunes [...]

Work and temperance are therefore the most important pillars of social life. Only where they are sound is it possible to have well-being, health, strength, peace, freedom, independence.

It is necessary not only to teach the young about these two pillars of social life but also make them put them actively into practice, encouraging them with one's own example. It is necessary to pray, and several times a day, in order to understand and to realise these two conditions for happiness. It is necessary to place our school system and the whole of education soundly on these two pillars. Then abundant means will be found for the social improvement of our people and also those near by. In this way throughout the earth brotherhood among the nations will spread and there will arise a more glorious period in the history of mankind.

RESPONSORY

Eph 5. 8-9; Mt 5, 14.16

R/. You are light in the Lord; be like children of light. * for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth.

V/. You are the light of the world: Your light must shine in the sight of men.

R/. For the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth.

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Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer

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Morning Prayer

SCRIPTURE READING

Rm 12, 1-2

My brothers, I implore you by God's mercy to offer your very selves to him: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance; the worship offered by mind and heart. Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade, and you whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, what is good, acceptable and perfect.

SHORT RESPONSORY

R/. The law of God guides him, * his mind is fixed on God.

The law of God guides him, his mind is fixed on God.

V/. His steps will never falter

*. his mind is fixed on God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The law of God guides him, his mind is fixed on God.

Ant. At the Ben. Whoever does the will of my Father , says the Lord, is my brother, and sister and mother.

INTERCESSIONS

United in the liturgy of praise, let us invoke Christ Our Lord that, following the example of Blessed Bronislas Markiewicz, we may serve him in holiness and justice all the days of our life:

Sanctify your people, O Lord.

You were tempted in every way that we are, but you did not sin,

– Lord Jesus have mercy on your people.

You came to serve and not to be served,

– Lord Jesus teach us to serve you in our brothers and sisters.

You call everyone to perfect love,

– Lord Jesus make your people holy.

You wanted your disciples to be salt of the earth and light of the world,

– Lord Jesus, enlighten your people.

In Blessed Bronislas Markiewicz you have given us a model of dedication to orphans, to poor children and to youth abandoned and morally neglected:

– Lord Jesus, grant that we and all the members of the Salesian Family may show in our lives the same love for those most in need.

Our Father.

PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God,
who chose the priest Blessed Bronislas,
to be the father and protector of abandoned youth,
grant that we,
encouraged by his example of untiring work and temperance,
may faithfully carry out your will
and be assiduous in your service.
Through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

Evening Prayer

We are well assured that everything helps to secure the good of those who love God, those whom he has called in fulfilment of his design. All those who from the first were known to him, he has destined from the first to be moulded into the image of his Son, who is thus to become the eldest-born among many brethren. So predestined, he called them; so called, he justified them; so justified, he glorified them

SHORT RESPONSORY

R/. The Lord is good; * he loves good deeds.

The Lord is good; he loves good deeds.

V/. His face is turned towards the upright man.

* he loves good deeds.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

The Lord is good; he loves good deeds.

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Ant. At the Magn. You have left all things and have followed me; you will be repaid a hundred times over, and gain eternal life.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us ask the Father the source of all holiness, that through the example and the help of the saints we may live according to our baptism.

Lord make us holy as you are holy.

Holy Father, it was your will that we be called your children and that is what we are,

– may you Church all over the world glorify you with the light of its holiness.

Holy Father you have called us to walk in your light in a way worthy of our vocation and to do always the things that please you,

– may our lives be rich in every kind of good work.

Holy Father, you call some to follow more closely Christ poor and humble,

– grant that they may reach the perfection of love.

Holy Father, Blessed Bronislas Markiewicz, personified in his life the spirit of “work and temperance” learned at the school of Don Bosco;

– grant to the members of the religious Institutes he founded, under the protection of Saint Michael the Archangel, and all of us to live in the same spirit.

Holy Father, bring our deceased brothers and sisters to the contemplation of your face,

– make us too worthy of your glory.

Our Father.

PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God,
who chose the priest Blessed Bronislas,
to be the father and protector of abandoned youth,
grant that we,
encouraged by his example of untiring work and temperance,
may faithfully carry out your will
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Through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,
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