

COMMENTARY ON THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Assuerus, king of Susa in Persia (482-472, B. C.), had chosen Esther, niece of Mardochai as his queen. Aman, the major-domo of the palace, well known for his hatred of the Jews, flew into a great rage, and knowing Mardochai to be a Jew, swore to exterminate at one blow all the members of his race. To this end, he laid a complaint before the king against these foreigners who were settled in all the towns of his kingdom, and obtained a decree authorizing their wholesale massacre. Upon learning of this decree, Mardochai indulged in great lamentations while telling Esther that she ought to inform the king of Aman's plot. Whereupon Esther presented herself royally dressed before the king with the request that he would join her in a feast, together with Aman. In the course of the banquet the queen began her complaint to the king: "We are given up, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain and to perish." And Assuerus learning that Esther was a Jewess and that Mardochai was her uncle, answered and said: "Who is this, and of what power that he should do these things." And Esther said: "It is this Aman that is our adversary and most wicked enemy." Upon this, the king enraged against his minister rose up and commanded that Aman should be hanged on the gibet that he had prepared for Mardochai, while the edict against the Jews was revoked. This bible narrative shows how God watched over His people and preserved them, for the sake of the promised Messias. "I am the salvation of the people," saith the Lord, "in whatever tribulation they shall cry to me, I will hear them; and I will be their Lord forever" (*Introit*). "If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou wilt quicken me, O Lord; and Thou wilt stretch forth Thy hand against the wrath of my enemies; and Thy right hand shall save me" (*Offertory*). The *Communion* psalm speaks of the just man weighed down by misfortune whom God forsakes not, while that of the *Gradual* shows, how in answer to the cry of those who hope in Him God causes the sinner to fall into his own net and again, that of the *Alleluia* sings of all the marvels which God has wrought for the deliverance of His people. All this is a type of what God is constantly doing for His Church and of what He will do in a special way at the end of time. Aman, whom the king condemned at Esther's banquet, is like the man spoken of in the *Gospel* who came to the wedding feast and was cast by the king's command into exterior darkness because he had not "put on the new man who according to God is created in justice and holiness and truth" (*Epistle*). Thus will almighty God treat all those who, while belonging to the body of the Church by their faith, are found within the wedding-chamber without being clothed, with the robe of charity. Since they are not quickened by sanctifying grace they have no share in the soul of the mystical body of Christ. "Wherefore," says St Paul, "putting away lying speak the truth every one with his neighbour, for we are members one of another... Let not the sun go down upon your anger" (*Epistle*). Those who do not fulfil this command will be cast by the supreme judge into the torments of hell. Assuerus, in his anger, caused Aman to be hanged. So also the king in the *Gospel* "was angry; and sending he destroyed those murderers and burnt their city." More than a million Jews perished at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman general when the city was destroyed, and the Temple burned. The faithless Aman was replaced by Mardochai; the wedding guests by those whom the king's servants found in the highways; the Jews by the Gentiles. To these last, at Pentecost, the apostles turned, filled with the Holy Ghost. And at the last Judgment, foretold on these last Sundays of the cycle, these rewards and punishments will be final. The elect will take part in the eternal marriage feast, while the damned will be cast into exterior darkness, into the avenging flames, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Commentary From St. Andrew Daily Missal, 1952 ed.

Commemorative Proper Prayers of the Mass Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost Provided Courtesy of Una Voce Orange County



How camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?

COLLECT

Omnípotens et miséricors Deus, univérſa nobis adversántia propitiátus excludé: ut mente et córpore páriter expédíti, quæ tua sunt, líberis méntibus exsequámur. Per Dóminum.

Almighty and merciful God, in Thy goodness keep us, we beseech Thee, from all things hurtful; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may accomplish those things which belong to Thy service. Through our Lord.

SECRET

Hæc múnera quæsumus, Dómine, quæ óculis tuæ majestátis offerimus, salutária nobis esse concede. Per Dóminum nostrum.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that the gifts which we offer up in the sight of Thy majesty, may avail us to salvation. Through our Lord.

POSTCOMMUNION

Tua nos, Dómine, medicínalis operátio, et a nostris perversitátibus cleménter expédíat, et tuis semper fáciat inhærére mandátis. Per Dóminum nostrum.

May the healing power of Thy grace, O Lord, mercifully rid us of all perversity of heart, and make us ever cleave to Thy commandments. Through our Lord.