**12th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME [23rdJune, 2013]**

READINGS: Zechariah 12:10-11/ Gal.3:26-29/ Luke 9:18-24

THEME: ALL ARE ONE IN CHRIST

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

Often the death of a beloved person unites a family in grief and mourning. Similarly in the first reading the prophet Zechariah prophesies that the death of the promised Messiah would bring a great mourning in the city of Jerusalem: ‘when ***they look on him whom they have pierced***, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him as one weeps over a first-born. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be …great’ (Zech. 12:10-11).

The Gospel of John sees Jesus Christ as this promised Messiah when at His death on the cross a soldier pierced His side with a spear: ‘one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified and his testimony is true. …For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled … “***they shall look on him whom they pierced***”’ (Jn. 19:34-37).

While many Jews expected the promised Messiah, as the son of David, to save them by his military might or political power, Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, reveals that His mission was for a spiritual salvation through His death and resurrection. And so when Peter identified Jesus as the Messiah (Christ) of God, He immediately mentioned His suffering, death and resurrection in Jerusalem (Lk. 9:18-24: gospel reading).

Jesus’ death, like that of a beloved one, is to bring together the scattered children of God (Jn. 11:52). Jesus Himself illustrated it this way: ‘when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself’ [St. John explains that the lifting up of Jesus from the earth signifies His death on the cross] (Jn. 12:32-33).

In the second reading, St. Paul further emphasizes that our oneness in Jesus Christ is based on one faith and one baptism: ‘In Christ Jesus you are all children of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ***you are all one in Christ Jesus***’ (Gal. 3:26-28).

YOU ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS: Beloved, in Christ Jesus we all belong to the one family of God: we all have God as our Father, Jesus Christ as our Saviour and the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier; and we have all been called into one Church through a common faith and baptism. We have all been created by one Creator-Father and not by different gods; we have all been saved by the same precious blood of the same Saviour and not by the bloods of different saviours with different degrees of holiness; we are all being sanctified by the same Holy Spirit and not by various spirits holy and unholy.

NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK: As one family of God through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, we should not make distinctions nor discriminate based on race, colour, language, tribe or clan: there should be neither Jew nor Greek, neither black nor white, neither African nor American, neither Akan nor Ewe, neither Ga nor Frafra, etc.

NEITHER SLAVE NOR FREE: As one family of God, we should not make distinctions nor discriminate based on socio-cultural, economic-political, or educational status: there should be neither slave nor free, neither subject nor royal, neither poor nor rich, neither NPP nor NDC, neither illiterate nor literate, etc.

NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE: As one family of God, there should be no discrimination based on gender or physical ability/disability. The sharing of benefits and the offering of opportunities should not be based merely on the fact that one is male or female, blind or has sight, etc. They should be based on the principles of equal rights before God. And society should pay more attention to those who have been neglected for centuries.

CONCLUSION: Conscious of our common origin in one Creator-Father, or our common salvation through one Saviour Jesus Christ, and of our common sanctification by the same Holy Spirit, let us aspire in the church and outside the church to promote and foster one family of God. May the Divine Spirit constantly stir in our hearts that love from above which knows no distinctions or discriminations – that love which is passionate about bringing God’s children together. Amen!