

Reflection Saturday Week 17 – St Alphonsus Liguori 2020

Living in the 18th century, St Alphonsus spent his first years as a priest with the homeless and marginalized young people of Naples. He founded the “Evening Chapels” which were run by these same young people. These chapels were centres of prayer, community, the Word of God, social activities and education. When he died, there were 72 of these chapels with over 10,000 active participants. In 1729, Alphonsus left his family home and took up residence in the Chinese College in Naples. It was there that he began his missionary experience in Naples among people who were much poorer and more abandoned than any of the street children in Naples. Because of this work he was able to produce booklets and materials on theology and spirituality that were accessible to the poor. In the end, he produced his literary works in over 72 languages. He was truly light and salt, opening people of all nations to the Good News of Jesus Christ and the love of God for them. The redemptorists whom he founded to continue his work continue to be salt and light for many throughout the Church today. Let us now be salted and enlightened by this great Saint:

- *Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with God, familiarly and with confidence and love, as if speaking to the dearest and most loving of friends.*
- *Ask those who love God with a sincere love, and they will tell you that they find no greater or prompter relief amid the troubles of their life than in a loving conversation with their Divine Friend.*
- *There is no need of an intermediary to speak to God on your behalf, because God finds delight in having you speak with Him personally and in all confidence.*
- *Speak to God often of your business, your plans, your troubles, your fears - of everything that concerns you.*
- *The heart of man is, so to speak, the paradise of God.*
- *Since God’s delight is to be with you, let your delight be found in God.*

A short cut to ploughing . . .

A farmer wrote a letter to his son who was in prison for robbing a bank: *“This year, I can’t plant potatoes because you are not here to plough the field.”* The son wrote back, *“Dad, please don’t dare plough the field. That is where I hid the money I stole.”* The police intercepted the letter and by the next day they'd dug up the entire field but found nothing. The son wrote to his father, *“Now you can plant your potatoes.”*

