

November 6, 2011

Renewal of Commitment for English SNJM Sisters and associates

HOMILY

Dear Mother,
Dear Sisters,
Dear Associates of the community,

It is a real joy and a great honour for me to be with you today on the occasion of the two hundredth (200th) anniversary of birth of your foundress, Mother Eulalie Durocher. Within the celebration context of such an event, the Word of God brought to the believers of Thessalonica by Paul the Apostle takes a special meaning or significance : *We do not want you to be uninformed about those who have died*. No enigma and no doubt concerning Mother Eulalie Durocher who has joined her Lord on October 6, 1849. While beatifying Mother Marie Rose, our Church, with a *radiant wisdom* judgement (using the expression of Book of Wisdom quoted in the first reading) has assured us that she is really in heaven, near Our Lord. For this certitude, we rejoice and thank God.

With great emotion, I remember being here in 2004 for the ceremony of Translation of the remains of this great lady, Mother Marie-Rose. We are in a place filled with history, our religious history. Let us praise God for this nice gift and let us never forget that several saints, men and women, have been the founders of our great country.

I am also happy to see that today, in 2011 some generous persons, being consecrated to God, want to follow the steps of Blessed Mother Marie-Rose and pursue her heritage,

continuing to dedicate their lives to their human brothers and sisters, especially in educational, social and pastoral areas. May God bless your commitment which you daringly renew today, with joy and with all your heart. May He give you the grace to be closely united to Him every day of your life. With confidence, we pray that while generously renewing your consecration, either as religious or as associates, each one of us would become trustworthy of the Wisdom we will meet in the various paths of our lives. May this Wisdom be strengthened in us and in our commitment so that, seeing our radiant face, people's hearts would be attracted by God (First reading).

In our effervescent environment, to venture unto paths of life, as we spoke earlier, is not obvious. Vigilance, as a virtue, is imperative. Today again the Word of God enlightens us and exhorts us to be vigilant. *One who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care, says the Book of Wisdom.* If all day long we care for God, if *our soul* and our heart *thirst for Him*, (Psalm Response) a song of joy will be on our lips and God will always be on our side, helping and supporting us on the path of life. *The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete (Jn 3, 29).*

We perfectly know how in our days it is easy to be consumed with worry, fear and desperate temptations, but being close to God, we will never lose hope. *We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope (Second Reading).* *Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us (Rm 5, 5).*

The Gospel today relates the story of five foolish and five wise bridesmaids. The first young ladies have been prudent bringing more oil in their flasks. Now they show another sign of wisdom. If they do not share with the last five women, it is not a lack of generosity, but because they know that if they share, no one out of the ten ladies would have enough oil and, finally, no one could enter the wedding feast.

Mathew sees in the parable, the contrast between wise and foolish people as the accomplishment of good deeds and lack of good deeds. As the wise bridesmaids, who were adequately equipped for their task, let us stay awake and let us be prepared and ready to meet the Lord, our Saviour, who will certainly come, one day or the other, for each one of us.

Let us offer God the oil of chastity, poverty and obedience as a free expression of our religious and associated life. The key to achieve this ideal is to feel God's love for us and deepen our relationship with Him and through Him. Our response to God's abundant love will be to live according to Jesus, our model, our friend and our Spouse for life and eternity.

Therefore encourage one another with these words (Second reading). How may this be ? By coming to know the legitimate expectations of our brothers and sisters, being sure and convinced that christianism is a Good News; by having such a good supply of oil that it will be sufficient for us and for those who are running out of it, for we do not want anyone being unable to attend the coming Bridegroom. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

Mgr Michel Parent, V. É.
Chancellor