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“The Lord comes to our aid and raises us up”

You must never treat anyone unmercifully. If you think someone is not worthy of your mercy, you should realize that you don't deserve mercy either. You do not deserve to have been created, or to be a Christian, or to be a son of God, or to have the family you have... (The Forge, 145)

5 December

Many other scenes of the Gospel have also made a deep impact on us, such as his forgiveness of the adulterous woman, the parable of the prodigal son, that of the lost sheep, that of the pardoned debtor, the resurrection of the son of the widow at Naim [1]. How many reasons based on justice could Christ have found to work this great wonder! The only son of that poor widow had died, he who gave meaning to her life, he who could help her in her old age. But Jesus didn't perform the miracle out of justice, but out of compassion, because his heart was moved by human suffering.

What security should be ours in considering the mercy of the Lord! "He has but to cry for redress, and I, the ever merciful, will listen to him" [2]. It is an invitation, a promise that he will not fail to fulfill. "Let us therefore draw near with confidence

to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" [3]. The enemies of our sanctification will be rendered powerless if the mercy of God goes before us. And if through our own fault and human weakness we should fall, the Lord comes to our aid and raises us up. "You had learned to avoid negligence, to flee from arrogance, to grow in piety, not to be a prisoner of worldly matters, to prefer the eternal to the passing. But since human weakness cannot maintain a steady pace in such a slippery world, the good doctor has prescribed remedies for not getting lost and the merciful judge has not led you to despair of pardon" [4]. (Christ is passing by, 7)

[1] Luke 7:11-17

[2] Ex 22:27

[3] Heb 4:16

[4] St Ambrose, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam*, 7 (PL 15,1540)

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