

Weekly Gospel Readings
3rd Sunday of Paope

Jesus and Beelzebul

“Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand.”
[\(Matthew 12:25\)](#)

On the Third Sunday of the blessed month of Paope, the Church reads [Matthew 12:22-28](#). In this reading, Jesus heals a demon-possessed blind and mute man. Instead of glorifying and thanking God for this miracle, the Pharisees attack Christ and claim that He can only cast out demons through “Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.”

Yet rather than becoming angry with the Pharisees and having an emotional outburst, Jesus presents a logical argument by explaining, “If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?” [\(Matthew 12:26\)](#). With divine wisdom, He exposes the absurdity of their claim, showing that Satan’s kingdom cannot operate in division. By this response, Christ not only silences His accusers but also teaches us a profound lesson about the necessity of unity in the Church and in our own lives.

By definition, unity is “a condition of harmony.” Using this logic, Christ explains that it is impossible for a demon to cast out a demon. If Satan were to allow this, then he would be divided against himself, and his kingdom would collapse in chaos. In the same manner, the Church and Christians cannot be divided amongst each other. Division leads to chaos, and a Church with chaos is no longer rooted in the harmony of Christ.

As St. Cyprian of Carthage explains, “There is one God, and Christ is one, and there is one Church, and one chair founded upon the rock by the word of the Lord.” To be part of Christ’s Body means to be united in Him, for there cannot be multiple competing “bodies.” Division undermines the very nature of the Church.

Yet, if there is one Church and one God, why do divisions arise? Quite simply, due to a lack of love. As St. Paul teaches us, “And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” [\(Colossians 3:14\)](#). Love is the bond that holds the Church together. Without love, even the strongest structures collapse.

Christ Himself gave us the model of perfect love that leads to unity: a love that is humble, sacrificial, and enduring. St. Paul beautifully describes this love: “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” [\(1 Corinthians 13:4-7\)](#). Where this love is lived out, unity flourishes. Where it is absent, division creeps in.

Let us pray that God strengthens us in our mission to strive for this perfect love. The Church was established through the love of Christ, and we must keep the Church and our own homes united by continuously and earnestly striving to demonstrate this same love. St. Paul teaches us that “for just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” [\(1 Corinthians 12:12\)](#). Unity is not the task of priests alone, nor of parents alone—it is the responsibility of each

member of the Body. Just as every part of the body contributes to health, so too every believer contributes to the unity of the Church and of the home.

Amen

Sources:

- Bible, English Standard Version
- Catena Bible, Church Father Commentaries
- Commentaries on the Gospel of St. Matthew by Father Tadros Malaty
- St. Cyprian of Carthage, *On the Unity of the Church*