

“God who created you without you, will not save you without you”

I am copying this example of cowardice from a letter so that you will not imitate it: "I am certainly very grateful to you for keeping me in mind, because I need many prayers. But I would also be grateful if, when you ask Our Lord to make me an apostle, you would not insist on asking him to make me surrender my freedom." (Furrow, 11)

28 August

I readily understand those words of St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, which ring out like a wonderful hymn to freedom, ‘God who created you without you, will not save you without you’ [1]. Every single one of us, you and I as well, always has the possibility, the unfortunate possibility of rising up against God, of rejecting him (perhaps by our behaviour) or of crying out, ‘we do not want this man to rule over us’[2]...

Ask yourself now (I too am examining my conscience) whether you are holding firmly and unshakably to your choice of Life? When you hear the most lovable voice of God urging you on to holiness, do you freely answer ‘Yes’? Let us turn our gaze once more to

Jesus, as he speaks to the people in the towns and countryside of Palestine. He doesn't want to force himself upon us. 'If you have a mind to be perfect...' [3], he says to the rich young man. The young man refused to take the hint, and the Gospel goes on to say: *abiit tristis* [4], he went away forlorn. That is why I have sometimes called him the 'sad lad'. He lost his happiness because he refused to hand over his freedom to God. (Friends of God, 23-34)

[1] St Augustine, *Sermo 169*, 13 (PL 38,923)

[2] Luke 19:14

[3] Matt 19:21

[4] Matt 19:22

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