

There is a deep seriousness in the readings today.

St Paul gathers the elders of Ephesus one final time, and his words sound almost like a father preparing his children for danger.

He says: **“Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock.”**

Watch.

Because the Church lives in the world like sheep among wolves.

And Paul knows what is coming.

False teaching.

Division.

Confusion.

Not only from outside the Church—

but even from within.

**“Men will arise speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.”**

That is sobering.

The danger to souls is not always obvious evil.

Sometimes it comes clothed in religious language.

Something softer than the Gospel.

Something easier than holiness.

Something that slowly empties the Faith of its power.

And Paul warns them with tears.

Because eternal things are at stake.

Then he says something beautiful:

**“I commend you to God and to the word of his grace.”**

Not to strategy.

Not to human cleverness.

Grace.

Because the Church survives by divine life, not merely human strength.

That is why the saints always understood the deepest battle to be spiritual.

Not first political.

Not cultural.

Spiritual.

A battle for truth.

For holiness.

For souls.

And today the Church gives us St Bernardine of Siena.

A saint who preached the Holy Name of Jesus through cities full of corruption, division, greed, and violence.

Italy in his day was fractured and restless.

And Bernardine walked from town to town carrying the name of Jesus like fire.

Calling people to repentance.

Calling society back to Christ.

And thousands were converted because holiness has authority the world cannot imitate.

Then the Gospel opens Christ's great prayer before His Passion.

And listen carefully to what He asks the Father:

**“Holy Father, keep them in your name.”**

Keep them.

Because the world pulls constantly in the opposite direction.

Away from truth.

Away from purity.

Away from God.

Christ knows how fragile His disciples are.

He knows fear is coming.

The Cross will scatter them.

And so He prays for them before entering His suffering.

That is profoundly consoling.

Because Christ still intercedes for His Church now.

Then He says something extraordinary:

**“They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.”**

That is one of the great forgotten truths of Catholic life.

The Church is in the world—

but she does not belong to it.

A faithful Catholic should never feel fully at home in a culture drifting from God.

Because baptism changes a person fundamentally.

The Christian now belongs first to Christ.

And yet notice carefully:

Christ does not ask the Father to remove His disciples from the world.

He says:

**“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”**

That is the mission of the Church.

Not escape.

Witness.

Holiness lived publicly.

Truth spoken courageously.

Charity lived visibly.

And then comes the centre of the Gospel:

**“Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth.”**

Truth sanctifies.

Not feelings.

Not trends.

Truth.

That is why doctrine matters.

That is why the Church cannot simply adapt herself to every age.

Because souls are sanctified by truth, not illusion.

And perhaps this is where the readings become most urgent for us now.

We live in an age exhausted by confusion.

People no longer know what marriage is.

What the human person is.

What freedom is for.

And into that confusion the Church must still proclaim calmly:

Your word is truth.

Not harshly.

Not arrogantly.

But clearly.

Because people drowning in confusion do not need softer lies.

They need reality.

And that reality is finally a person:

Jesus Christ.

St Bernardine knew that.

That is why he preached the Holy Name constantly.

Because the world is not saved by ideas alone.

It is saved by Christ.

And this becomes concrete in the Eucharist.

Because there the Church receives not merely teachings about Christ—

but Christ Himself.

The same Lord who prayed in the Upper Room now gives His Body and Blood to His people.

And through that communion, souls are strengthened to remain faithful in a hostile world.

So today the Church speaks with both gravity and hope.

Gravity—because souls can be led astray, and truth matters eternally.

Hope—because Christ has not abandoned His flock.

He still prays for His Church.

Still gives grace.

Still raises saints.

Still protects His people through the sacraments and the truth handed on by the apostles.

And in the middle of a confused world, the Church still lifts high the Holy Name of Jesus—

the only name by which the world can truly be saved.