

Monday of the Seventh Week of Easter

Gospel text (Jn 16:29-33): The disciples said to Jesus; “Now you are talking plainly, and not in any figure of speech. Now we realize that you know everything and that you do not need to have anyone question you. Because of this we believe that you came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you believe now? Behold, the hour is coming and has arrived when each of you will be scattered to his own home and you will leave me alone. But I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

“Take courage, I have conquered the world.”

Fr. Jordi CASTELLET i Sala
(Vic, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, we may have the feeling that the world of faith in Christ is weakening. Many are symptoms against the fortitude and courage we would like to receive from a life integrally based on the Gospel. Consumerism, capitalism, sensuality and materialism values are very much in fashion and against any representation that may be in tune with the evangelical demands. Nevertheless, this combination of values and life ways do not provide either our own personal plenitude or our peace; in fact, it rather brings an intimate feeling of discomfort and uneasiness. Could not it be because of this circumstance that, today, we see lots of people in public sulking, lost in thought and worrying about a rather obscure future, most probably because they have pledged it against the cost of a car, a flat or some holidays they simply cannot afford?

Jesus' words inspire confidence: “Take courage, I have conquered the world.” (Jn 16:33), that is, through his Passion, Death and Resurrection, He has attained the eternal life, life with nothing to stop it, a limitless life because it has overcome all limits and all difficulties.

We, soldiers of Christ, can overcome these difficulties too, as He did, in spite of the fact we may have to go throughout our life through many deaths and resurrections, never wanted but certainly assumed by the very Paschal Mystery of Christ. For “deaths” indeed are, losing a friend, parting with a beloved person, the failure of a project or the limitations our own human weakness impose upon us...

But “in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us” (Rm 8:37). Let us be witnesses to God's love, because He has, with us, “done great things” (Lk 1:49) and has given us his help to overcome all difficulties, even death, because Christ is sending us the Holy Spirit.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“Throughout this time which elapsed between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, God's Providence had this in view, to teach and impress upon both the eyes and hearts of His own people that the Lord Jesus Christ might be acknowledged to have as truly risen, as He was truly born, suffered, and died” (Saint Leo the Great)

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“It is necessary here to understand properly the secret of the unfathomable joy which dwells in Jesus and which is special to Him. If Jesus radiates such peace, such assurance, such happiness, such availability, it is by reason of the inexpressible love by which He knows that He is loved by His Father” (Saint Paul VI)

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“(…) The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. (….) ‘In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world’ (Jn 16:33)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, N° 1808)