

Tuesday of the Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 9:32-38): A demoniac who could not speak was brought to Jesus, and when the demon was driven out the mute man spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” But the Pharisees said, “He drives out demons by the prince of demons.”

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”

“Ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest”

Fr. Joan SOLÀ i Triadú
(Girona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel speaks of the man who was dumb because he was possessed, and of how his healing provoked different reactions between the crowd and the Pharisees who, in the face of prodigious evidence, nobody could deny, they attributed it to devilish powers “He drives out demons by the prince of demons” (Mt 9:34). Instead, the crowd marvels: “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel” (Mt 9:33). When referring to this passage St. John Chrysostom, says: “What the Pharisees truly resented was the crowds were considering Jesus superior, not only to those existing then, but to all that had ever existed.”

Jesus was not worried about the animosity of the Pharisees; He continued faithful to his mission. Moreover, Jesus, faced with the evidence that the guides of Israel,

instead of caring for and grazing the flock, what they were doing was leading it astray, He took pity on those tired and downcast crowds, like sheep without a shepherd. Crowds are grateful for a good leadership and yearn for it. That could be appreciated when we look at the pastoral visits Saint John Paul II made to several different places in the world. He gathered immense crowds around him to listen to his words, particularly our youth!

St. Josemaria Escriva wrote: “If we were consistent with our faith when we looked around us and contemplated the world and its history, we would be unable to avoid feeling in our own hearts the same sentiments that filled the heart of our Lord”, which would take us to a very generous apostolic task. But the disproportion amongst the crowds waiting for the preaching of the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the scarcity of ready workers to preach it, is quite evident. At the end of the text of the Gospel, though, Jesus gives us the solution: to ask the master of the harvest to send workers to his fields (cf. Mt 9:38).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“This divine heart is an abyss filled with all blessings, and into the poor should submerge all their needs. It is an abyss of lowliness to counteract our foolishness.” (Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque)

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“In the basis of this compassionate love Jesus healed the sick who were presented to him, and with just a few loaves of bread and fish he satisfied the enormous crowd.” (Francis)

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“Moved by so much suffering Christ not only allows himself to be touched by the sick, but he makes their miseries his own: ‘He took our infirmities and bore our diseases’ (Mt 8:17; cf. Isa 53:4).” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, N° 1505)