

Saturday 14th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 10,24-33): Jesus said to his apostles, «A student is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master. A student should be glad to become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If the head of the family has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of the family! So, do not be afraid of them.

»There is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, and nothing hidden that will not be made known. What I am telling you in the dark, you must speak in the light. What you hear in private, proclaim from the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but have no power to kill the soul. Rather be afraid of him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. For only a few cents you can buy two sparrows, yet not one sparrow falls to the ground without your Father's consent. As for you, every hair of your head has been counted. So do not be afraid: you are worth much more than many sparrows.

»Whoever acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my Father in heaven. Whoever rejects me before others I will reject before my Father in heaven».

«A student is not above his teacher»

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Today, the Gospel invites us to ponder over the relationship student teacher: «A student is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master» (Mt 10:24). Amongst us it is not impossible a student can excel over the teacher who taught him the basics of a given subject. We have instances in History like the painter Giotto who

quickly surpassed his teacher Cimbaue, or Manzoni, excelling over abbot Pieri. But the key to supreme wisdom is to be found only in the hands of the Man-God, where all of us can share it, although with a possibility to absorb it at different levels: from the great theologian St. Thomas Aquinas down to the boy getting ready for his First Communion. We may adorn it with as many different styled ornaments as we wish, but they will never amount to anything of essence that may enrich the intrinsic value of the doctrine. And, on the other hand, there are chances we may fall into some kind of heresy.

We must be careful not to try any mixtures that may distort us without any substantial contribution to the Good News. St. Augustine says, «We must abstain from meals, but even more so should we be fasting in errors». One time, someone lent me a book about the Guardian Angels where mention is made of some esoteric doctrines, such as the metempsychosis, and of an incomprehensible need of redemption allegedly affecting these pure spirits confirmed in goodness.

Today's Gospel opens our eyes to the unavoidable fact the student may, at times, be misunderstood, face obstacles or even be persecuted for declaring himself a follower of Christ. Jesus' life was a continuous service in defense of truth. If He was even named “Beelzebul”, it is not surprising that in quarrels, in cultural confrontations or in TV debates we are called retrogrades. Our faithfulness to Christ-Master is the maximum acknowledgement, which we can be proud of: «Whoever acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my Father in Heaven» (Mt 10:32).