

Saturday 15th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 12,14-21): The Pharisees went out and made plans to get rid of Jesus. As Jesus was aware of the plot, He went away from that place. Many people followed him and He cured all who were sick. Then He gave them strict orders not to make him known. In this way Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled: «Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him and He will announce my judgment to the nations. He will not argue or shout, nor will his voice be heard in the streets. The bruised reed He will not crush, nor snuff out the smoldering wick. He will persist until justice is made victorious and in him all the nations will put their hope».

«He cured all who were sick»

Fr. Josep M^a MASSANA i Mola OFM
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel brings up a double message. On the one hand, Jesus calls us with a beautiful invitation to follow him: «Many people followed him and He cured all who were sick» (Mt 12:15). If we follow him we shall find the remedy for all the troubles of our journey, as we were reminded not long ago: «Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest» (Mt 11:28). On the other hand, we are showed the value of gentle love: «He will not argue or shout» (Mt 12:19).

He knows we are burdened and weary because of the heaviness of our temperamental and physical weaknesses... and for this unexpected cross that has visited us with all its coarseness, with all our disagreements, disappointments, grief and sorrow. In fact, «the Pharisees went out and made plans to get rid of Jesus» (Mt 12:14) and... if we know the disciple is not above his teacher (cf. Mt 10:24), we should be conscious that we shall also have to suffer from incomprehension and persecution.

All in all, it is a heavy burden upon us, a bundle that strains us. And we feel as if

Jesus would be saying: «Cast off your bundle at me feet, and I will take care of it; give me that heavy burden that crashes you, and I will carry it; unload your worries and turn them over to me...».

It is kind of funny: Jesus invites us to cast off our burden, while He is offering us another one: his yoke, with the promise, however, that it is a soft and light one. He wants to show us that we cannot go around the world without any burden upon us. We are to carry some kind of load, anyway. But, let it not be our bundle full of materialism; let it be, instead, his burden that does not encumber us.

In Africa, mothers and elder sisters carry their offspring on their back. A missionary, once, saw a girl carrying her little brother... And he asked her: «Are you sure he is not too heavy for you?». And she answered back without thinking twice: «He is not heavy, he is my little brother, and I love him». Love, Jesus' yoke, is not only light, but it also sets us free from all that overwhelms us.