

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 9:30-37): Jesus and his disciples left from there and began a journey through Galilee, but he did not wish anyone to know about it. He was teaching his disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.” But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to question him.

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.” Taking a child, he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, “Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.”

“The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.”

Fr. Pedro-José YNARAJA i Díaz
(El Montanyà, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel explains when Jesus was walking with his disciples, skirting towns, through a great plain. Nothing better to get to know each other than walking and traveling in company. Thus, a feeling of trust is easily built, and trust brings confidence. And confidence transmits love. And love dazzles and surprises us when we discover the mystery hiding in the most intimate part of the human heart. With emotion, the Master speaks to his disciples about the mystery that gnaws at his heart. Sometimes, it is illusion; at times, when thinking it over, He is afraid; most of

the time He knows they will not understand him. But they are his friends, He must transmit to them whatever He has received from the Father, and, so far, He has done so. They do not understand him, but when He speaks to them, which means love, they tune in with his emotion, an evidence that, even if they are so insignificant, they rely on Him to succeed in his project. He will be delivered into human hands, He will be killed and three days after He will rise (cf. Mk 9:31)

Death and resurrection. These will be enigmatic concepts for some; unacceptable axioms, for others. He has come to reveal them, to proclaim that the joyous consummation for mankind has already come, although to make it come true, He, the friend the elder brother, the Son of the Father, will have to endure the cruelest suffering. But, what a sad paradox that, while He lives this intimate tragedy, his disciples are debating who will climb on top of the champions' podium when they reach the end of their race towards the Kingdom. But, would we behave in a different way? He who is free from personal ambition is to throw the first stone.

Jesus proclaims new values. To win is not the important thing, but to serve; He will fully prove it at the culminant point of his evangelization by washing his disciples' feet. Man's greatness lies not in the sage wisdom, but in the innocent naivety of the child. "Even though you would know the whole Bible and all the sentences of every philosopher by heart, what would be its value without the charity and the grace of God?" (Thomas de Kempis). By saluting the sage we satisfy our vanity, by embracing the child we embrace God and we become spiritually infused by Him, by becoming more godlike.