

# Friday 26th in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (Lk 10,13-16): Jesus said, «Alas for you Chorazin! Alas for you Bethsaida! So many miracles have been worked in you! If the same miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would already be sitting in ashes and wearing the sackcloth of repentance. Surely for Tyre and Sidon it will be better than for you on the Judgment Day. And what of you, city of Capernaum? Will you be lifted up to heaven? You will be thrown down to the place of the dead. Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me; and he who rejects me, rejects the one who sent me».**

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*«Whoever listens to you listens to me»*

Fr. Jordi SOTORRA i Garriga  
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Today, we contemplate Jesus addressing his speech to some towns of Galilee where He had preached and carried out the works by his Father, and that had been the cause of his preoccupation. Nowhere had He preached and made miracles as He did in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. The sowing had been plentiful, but the harvest had been meager. Not even Jesus could persuade them...! What a mystery human freedom is! We can say “no” to God... The evangelic message is not imposed upon us by force: it is offered to me but I can refuse it; I can accept it or reject it. Our Lord's respect for my freedom is total. What a responsibility for me!

Jesus' language: «Alas for you Chorazin! Alas for you Bethsaida!» (Lk 10:13) when his apostolic mission was over, is more indicative of suffering than of condemnation. The nearness of the Kingdom of God was not a call for penance and conversion for those towns. Jesus recognizes that Tyre and Sidon would have taken more advantage of all the grace granted to the Galilees.

But Jesus' frustration is even bigger when He refers to Capernaum. «Will you be lifted up to heaven? You will be thrown down to the place of the dead» (Lk 10:15). It was there where Peter had his home and Jesus had centered his preaching. Once again, we can detect in these words a feeling of sadness rather than a threat. We could, just as well, say the same out of many cities and persons of our time. They

**believe they are being lifted, but in fact, they are being thrown down.**

**«Whoever listens to you listens to me» (Lk 10:16). These words ending today's Gospel are a call to conversion and are bearers of hope. If we listen to Jesus' voice, we still have time. Conversion happens when love banishes selfishness from our life, which is a permanent unfinished task. St. Maximus will tell us: «Nothing is more pleasant and loved by God, than men convert to him with sincere contrition».**