

Saturday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 11:27-28): While Jesus was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.” He replied, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

“Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.”

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Today, we hear the best compliment Jesus could make of his own Mother: “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.” (Lk 11:28). With this reply, Jesus Christ does not reject the enthusiastic praise that the plain woman dedicated to His Mother, but He acknowledges it and goes even further, when stating that the Blessed Virgin Mary is blessed —mostly!— because she has been good and faithful in keeping the word of God.

At times, people ask me whether we Christians believe in predestination, as other religions do. Certainly not! We Christians believe God has reserved for us a destination of happiness. God wants us to be happy, fortunate, blessed. Take notice how this word is being repeated in Jesus' teachings: “Blessed, blessed, blessed... Blessed are the poor, the meek, the merciful, they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who have not seen and have believed» (cf. Mt 5:3-12; Jn 20:29). God wants our happiness, a happiness that begins right here in this world, even though the path leading to it is not wealth, nor power, nor easy success, nor fame, but, the poor and humble love of he who expects it all. The joy to believe! That joy Jacques Maritain, the converted one, spoke about.

It is a kind of happiness which is greater than the joy of living, because we believe in an endless and eternal life. Mary, Jesus' Mother, is not only blessed because she bore Him and nursed Him —as that local woman spontaneously surmised— but, mainly, because of her having heard the Word and kept it: for having loved and having let her Son Jesus love her. As the poet wrote: “Being able to say “mother”

and being addressed as “my son” / is what God envied of us.” Let Mary, Mother of Divine Love, pray for us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"The Creator of man, in order to unite Himself to the human race, should choose nay, create a Mother whom He knew to be worthy of, and acceptable to, Himself" (San Bernard)

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"Who finds time to hear God's word and to let themselves be attracted by his love? Faith in God demands a faith-filled surrender into the hands of the Love which sustains the world." (Benedict XVI)

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"God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant forever. The Son is his Father's definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 73)