

Tuesday 33rd in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 19,1-10): When Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the city, a man named Zaccheus was there. He was a tax collector and a wealthy man. He wanted to see what Jesus was like, but he was a short man and could not see because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore tree. From there he would be able to see Jesus who had to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, ‘Zaccheus, come down quickly for I must stay at your house today’. So Zaccheus hurried down and received him joyfully.

All the people who saw it began to grumble and said, «He has gone to the house of a sinner as a guest». But Zaccheus spoke to Jesus, «The half of my goods, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay him back four times as much». Looking at him Jesus said, «Salvation has come to this house today, for he is also a true son of Abraham. The Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost».

«The Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost»

Fr. Enric RIBAS i Baciana
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, I'll be Zaccheus. This personage was a wealthy man and the chief of the Publicans; I have more than I need and, perhaps too often, I behave like a Publican and forget about Jesus Christ. Amidst the crowd, Jesus seeks Zaccheus; today, amidst our world, He is precisely looking for me: «Come down quickly for I must stay at your house today» (Lk 19:5).

Zaccheus wants to see Jesus; if he does not run ahead and climbs up the sycamore tree, he will not be able to see him. I would also like to see God's deeds as much as

possible!, but I'm not too sure I am willing to behave like a fool as Zaccheus did. To allow for Jesus' reaction, the disposition of the chief among the Jericho Publicans is required; and, if he does not hurry up, he may eventually lose the opportunity to be touched by Jesus and be therefore saved. Maybe I have had too many occasions to meet Jesus and maybe it is about time to be courageous, to leave home to meet him and invite him to enter me, so that He can also say about me: «Salvation has come to this house today, for he is also a true son of Abraham. The Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost» (Lk 19:9-10).

Zaccheus receives Jesus into his home, his life and his heart, even though he probably does not feel worthy of a visit like that. His conversion is total: he begins by giving up any ambition for riches, followed with the intention to share his goods and he ends up with the strong decision to impart justice, while remedying his sins. Maybe, since a long time ago, Jesus has been asking me something similar, but I did not want to hear him and turned my deaf ears; I must still be converted.

St. Maximus said: «There is nothing God loves more and pleases him best as a man converting with true regret». Let him help me to make it come true today.