

Sunday 8th (C) in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 6,39-45): Jesus offered this example, «Can a blind person lead another blind person? Surely both will fall into a ditch. A disciple is not above the master; but when fully trained, he will be like the master. So why do you pay attention to the speck in your brother's eye while you have a log in your eye and are not conscious of it? How can you say to your neighbor: 'Friend, let me take this speck out of your eye', when you can't remove the log in your own? You hypocrite! First remove the log from your own eye and then you will see clearly enough to remove the speck from your neighbor's eye».

»A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For people do not pick figs from thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks».

«A disciple is not above the master; but when fully trained, he will be like the master»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
(Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the words of the Gospel make us think about how important examples are along with procuring an exemplary life for others. Yes, indeed, we have a saying that goes «“Friar example” is the best preacher», and another one saying «an image is worth a thousand words». Let us not forget that we, Christians, are —with no exception!— guides, as our Baptism confers on us a participation in Christ's priesthood (saving intercession): all of us that have received the baptism, have also received the baptismal priesthood. And all priesthood, beyond its mission to sanctify

and teach others, also embodies the munus —the function— to rule and lead.

Yes, with our behaviour —whether we like it or not— we have the opportunity to become a stimulating model for those around us. Let us think, for instance, about the influence parents have over their children, teachers over their pupils, authorities over citizens, etc. And Christians, consequently, must have a particularly lively conscience of this fact. For..., «can a blind person lead another blind person?» (Lk 6:39).

For us, Christians, what the Jews and the first generations of Christians said of Jesus Christ: «He has done all things well» (Mk 7:37); «all that Jesus did and taught» (Act 1:1) should be like a call to attention.

We must try to transform into deeds what we believe in and declare by word of mouth. On one occasion, the Pope Benedic XVI, when he still was Cardinal Ratzinger, asserted that «those adapted Christians are the most threatening danger», that is, those persons that boast of their Christianity but, in actual practice, their behaviour shows they do not manifest the characteristic “radicalism” of the Gospel.

To be radical, though, is not tantamount to be fanatical (for charity is patient and tolerant) or to be immoderate (for moderation is impossible in love matters). As Saint John Paul II has said, «the crucified Lord is an insurmountable testimony of patient love and humble mansuetude»: He is not fanatic or immoderate. But He is radical, so much so, that the centurion who was present at his death felt like saying: «Surely this was a righteous man» (Lk 23:47).