Wednesday of the Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mk* 10,32-45): The disciples were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead. The Twelve were anxious and those who followed were afraid. Once more Jesus took the Twelve aside to tell them what was to happen to him, «You see we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the foreigners who will make fun of him, spit on him, scourge him and finally kill him; but three days later He will rise».

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said to him, «Master, we want you to grant us what we are going to ask of you». And He said, «What do you want me to do for you?». They answered, «Grant us to sit one at your right and one at your left when you come in your glory». But Jesus said to them, «You don't know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized in the way I am baptized?». They answered, «We can». And Jesus told them, «The cup that I drink you will drink, and you will be baptized in the way I am baptized. But to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to grant. It has been prepared for others».

On hearing this, the other ten were angry with James and John; Jesus then called them to him and said, «As you know, the so-called rulers of the nations act as tyrants and their great ones oppress them. But it shall not be so among you; whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you shall make himself slave of all. Think of the Son of Man who has not come to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many».

«Think of the Son of Man who has not come to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many»

Fr, René PARADA Menéndez
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Today, the Lord teaches us which our attitude before the Cross must be. The ardent love of Jesus for His Father's Will, to carry out the salvation of Mankind, of each man, of each woman, urges Him to quickly move towards Jerusalem, where «the Son of Man will be given over (...) they will condemn him to death (...) they will scourge him and finally kill him» (Mk 10:33-34). Though, at times, we may not understand it or may be afraid of pain and suffering or of every day's contradictions, let us try to lovingly join God's salvific Will with the offering of our daily Cross.

Assiduous prayer and the Sacraments, especially the personal Confession of our sins and the Eucharist, will increase our love for God and our love for others, in such a way that we shall be able to affirm that «We can!» (Mk 10:39), in spite of our misery, fears and sins. Yes, we shall be able to take up our daily Cross and follow Him (cf. Lk 9:23) for love, with a smile; that cross that is evidenced by our ordinary everyday life: tiredness in our job, family difficulties, social relations, etc.

Only if we embrace our cross every day, denying us to serve others, shall we be able to identify ourselves with the Christ, who «came to serve and to give his life to redeem many» (Mk 10:45). John Paul II explained «the servitude of Jesus attains its culmination with his death in the Cross, that is by the total gift of himself». Let us, therefore, imitate Jesus Christ, by constantly transforming our love for Him in servicing actions for other people: wealthy or poor, educated or uneducated, young or old, without distinction. Servicing actions to get them closer to God and free them from sin.