

Tuesday 3th of Advent

Gospel text (Mt 21,28-32): Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people, «What do you think of this? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said to him: ‘Son, today go and work in my vineyard’. And the son answered: ‘I don't want to’. But later he thought better of it and went. Then the father went to the second and gave him the same command. This son replied: ‘I will go, sir’, but he did not go. Which of the two did what the father wanted?». They answered, «The first». And Jesus said to them, «Truly, I say to you: the publicans and the prostitutes are ahead of you on the way to the kingdom of heaven. For John came to show you the way of goodness but you did not believe him, yet the publicans and the prostitutes did. You were witnesses of this, but you neither repented nor believed him».

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Today, we contemplate the father who had two sons and went to the first and said to him: «Son, today go and work in my vineyard» (Mt 21:28). And he answered: «‘I don't want to’. But later he thought better of it and went» (Mt 21:29). Then, he also went to the second with the same command. And he replied: «‘I will go, sir’, but he did not go» (cf. Mt 21:30). What really matters is not saying “yes”, but “doing it”. As the saying goes «actions speak louder than words».

On another occasion, Jesus will refer to the doctrine taught by this parable: «Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in Heaven» (Mt 7:21). As Saint Augustine wrote, «there are two wills. Your will has to be corrected so as to identify it with God's will; but do not try to bend God's will to adapt it to yours». In the Catalan language we say a child “believes” you to mean he obeys you. There is an

identification of obedience and faith, of the relationship that exists between trust and obedience.

Obedience comes from the Latin composition “ob-audire”: meaning, to listen with great attention. And this should be evident in our prayer, in our not turning “a deaf ear” to the voice of Love. «We men tend to “defend ourselves”, to adhere to our selfishness. But God demands that, when obeying Him, we put our faith to work. At times, our Lord suggests what He wants in a whisper, deep, down, inside our conscience: we must remain on high alert to be able to distinguish his voice and be faithful to it» (Saint Josemaria Escrivà). To abide by God's will implies becoming a saint; to obey does not mean to be a puppet in someone else's hands, but to interiorize what we must accomplish: and then, to do it “because you feel like it”.

Our Mother, the Virgin Mary, a great teacher of obedience to the faith, will show us the way to learn how to obey the will of the Father.