

Friday 3rd of Advent

Gospel text (Jn 5,33-36): Jesus said to the Jews, «John also bore witness to the truth when you sent messengers to him, but I do not seek such human testimony; I recall this for you, so that you may be saved. John was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were willing to enjoy his light. But I have greater evidence than that of John: the works which the Father entrusted to me to carry out. The very works I do bear witness: the Father has sent me».

«John was a burning and shining lamp»

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Today, we, Christians, have a lot to learn from John the Baptist. Jesus compares him to the fire that burns and gives light: «John was a burning and shining lamp» (Jn 5:35). His mission, like ours, was to prepare the way of the Master: to flatten the hearts so that only Christ would shine, to announce that, if we faithfully follow Jesus Christ, a full Life is possible. John is the voice crying out in the desert: «Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths» (Mt 3:3). The Son of God comes to earth to rest in our hearts. —But... in my heart my freedom commands, and He is asking me “permission” to get in: this is why the difficult path leading to the human heart must be “flattened”. «That our judgment gets ready for the coming of Christ with not inferior a preparation to what we would do if He still had to come to this world» (St. Charles Borromeo).

Today we are asked to learn from St. John. This is not easy. Our self-renunciation and sacrifice, our commitment, the Truth... they are not very much in fashion today. Many are those that only react to money, pleasure, comfort, lies...? We must keep our heart clean and clear of things. Otherwise, neither Jesus nor other people can find any room in there.

But the Gospel is our way to Truth and happiness. Only God's Truth can set us free, even though this may mean persecution or even death. John the Baptist had already surmised it, but he assumed it, for this was his mission. His baptism was liberating and his words inviting to conversion, the path to get there.

Jesus finds his way easy, prepared, ripe by the Baptist's penitence. His deeds bear witness He is the envoy. He already finds hearts repented and humbled by John's testimony. The Master has only words of praise for him.

I wish each one of us could deserve the same words. Particularly, if we have been able to emphasize and introduce Him, while, at the same time, disappearing ourselves.