

## Wednesday after Epiphany

**Gospel text ( Mk 6,45-52): After the five thousand men were satiated, Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, towards Bethsaida, while he himself sent the crowd away. And having sent the people off, he went by himself to the hillside to pray. When evening came, the boat was far out on the lake while he was alone on the land.**

**Jesus saw his disciples straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, and before daybreak he came to them walking on the lake; and he was going to pass them by. When they saw him walking on the lake, they thought it was a ghost and cried out; for they all saw him and were terrified. But at once he called to them, «Courage! It's me; don't be afraid». Then Jesus got into the boat with them and the wind died down. They were completely astonished, for they had not really grasped the fact of the loaves; their minds were dull.**

---

***«And having sent the people off, he went by himself to the hillside to pray»***

Fr. Melcior QUEROL i Solà  
(Ribes de Freser, Girona, Spain)

**Today, we see how Jesus, after dismissing the apostles and the crowd, goes off by himself to pray. His whole life has been a constant dialogue with the Father, and yet, he chooses to go to the hillside to pray. And what about us? How do we pray? More often than not the frantic pace of our worldly life becomes a serious obstacle for our spiritual life. And we forget that it is as equally important to “feed” our soul, as it is to feed our body. However, God and our relationship with Him does not stand high in our priorities. Under such circumstances it is difficult to truly pray. Nor is it possible to maintain a prayerful spirit when we beg for help only in times of trouble.**

**Finding room and time for prayer requires a yearning within us to meet God with the unshakable conviction that nobody and nothing can replace him. Without this longing to communicate with God, our prayer easily drifts into a soliloquy, a tool we use just to try to solve nagging problems. We are also easily distracted during prayer, our hearts and minds invaded by all kind of thoughts and feelings. Praying is not like chatting but rather a simple elated encounter with Love. It is our ongoing relationship with God: the silent communication between me, the poor one who needs everything, and “You”, the transcendent provider of all. The constant reward of true prayer lies in our sure knowledge that our Creator loves us.**

**Prayer and Christian life are inseparable. Origenes, the ancient Church Father reminds us that: «Only he who joins prayer to deeds and deeds to prayer, prays unceasingly. Only in this way can we understand what it means to pray constantly». We must indeed pray without stop to sanctify our deeds and join them to our prayer. The continuous dialogue Jesus offers us in prayer not only soothes our spirit but bring us to realize that prayer is the breath of God’s love. If we do not breathe we die; if we do not pray, we die spiritually.**