

Monday 27th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 10,25-37): A teacher of the Law came and began putting Jesus to the test. And he said, «Master, what shall I do to receive eternal life?». Jesus replied, «What is written in the Scripture? How do you understand it?». The man answered, «It is written: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself». Jesus replied, «What a good answer! Do this and you shall live». The man wanted to keep up appearances, so he replied, «Who is my neighbor?» (...).

My "neighbor"

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, in the centre of the story of the Good Samaritan, we are presented with the fundamental question of what shall we do to inherit eternal life. Jesus Christ very simply refers him to the Bible, the reply of which is indisputable. But the topic derives towards a practical matter, of ambiguous elucidation at that time: "Who is my neighbor?".

To such a specific question, Jesus answers it with this parable... Then a Samaritan enters the stage. He does not ask how far his obligations of solidarity extend nor does he ask about the merits required for eternal life. Instead, something else happens: his heart is wrenched open and he himself now becomes a "neighbor", over and above any other consideration. Here the question changes: the issue is no longer which other person is my neighbor or not. The question is about me.

—O Lord, help me to become like a person in love, someone whose heart is open to be shaken by another's needs. Then I will find my neighbor or better, then I will be found by him.