Friday of the Sixth Week of Easter

Gospel text (*Jn* 16:20-23): Jesus said to his disciples: “Amen, amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief will become joy. When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world. So you also are now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you. On that day you will not question me about anything. Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you.”

“Your grief will become joy”

Fr. Joaquim FONT i Gassol
(Igualada, Barcelona, Spain)

Today we begin the Decade of the Holy Spirit. Reliving the memory of the Cenacle, we see the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Mother of Good Counsel, talking with the Apostles. What a warm and abounding conversation! Recalling all the joys they shared with their Master: The Paschal days, the Ascension and Jesus' promises. The sufferings of the Passion days have turned into joy. What a nice atmosphere at the Cenacle! And what is yet to come, as Jesus has assured them.

We now know that Mary, Queen of the Apostles, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, Mother of the growing Church, guides us to receive the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. The gifts are like a boat's sails when unfurled and the wind —representing grace— blowing in favor: what a speed and easiness of the course!

The Lord has also promised to transform into joy the hardship of our journey: “No one will take your joy away from you” (Jn 16:22) and “your joy may be complete” (Jn 16:24). And in Psalm 126:6: “Those who go forth weeping, carrying sacks of seed, Will return with cries of joy, carrying their bundled sheaves.”

All this week the Liturgy speaks of revitalizing, of exulting (jumping with joy), of an eternal and certain happiness. Everything leads us to live in prayer. As Saint Josemaria Escrivá wrote: “I want you to be happy always, for cheerfulness is an essential part of your way. Pray that the same supernatural joy may be granted to us all.”

Human beings need laughter both for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. Healthy humor teaches us how to live. Saint Paul will say: “We know that all things work for good for those who love God” (Rm 8:28).

And here you have a good ejaculatory prayer!: “It's all unto good”; “Omnia in bonum!”

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “The exulting angel's sang when the Lord was born. Over that indescribable work of the Divine love how ought the humbleness of men to rejoice, when the joy of the lofty angels is so great” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “Difficulties can remove human joy from anything. But the joy that the Lord gives us, that makes us rejoice, raises us in the hope of finding it, even in the darkest moments” (Francis)

- “(...) Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name (cf. Jn 14:13). It is with this confidence that St. James and St. Paul exhort us to pray at all times” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 2633)