Monday of the Seventh Week of Easter

Gospel text (*Jn* 16:29-33): The disciples said to Jesus; “Now you are talking plainly, and not in any figure of speech. Now we realize that you know everything and that you do not need to have anyone question you. Because of this we believe that you came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you believe now? Behold, the hour is coming and has arrived when each of you will be scattered to his own home and you will leave me alone. But I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

“Take courage, I have conquered the world.”

Fr. Miquel SALÓ Casajuana
(Sabadell, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, Jesus affirms that the disciples will leave Him alone, but He immediately adds that He is not alone, "because the Father is with me" (Jn 16:32). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit form a community of love. Likewise, we, the baptized, also share in this communion of love; we are never alone: "It is precisely because he loves us that the Lord does not leave us alone in life’s trials; he promises us the Paraclete, that is, the Advocate, the ‘Spirit of truth’" (Leo XIV).

We can participate in the divine life at any moment. As creatures, the Father always sustains us in existence. As the baptized, we can always share in the Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity within us. Bear in mind that you can always turn to the Lord in any place and under any circumstance. This relationship with the Trinity is nourished especially through the sacraments and must be manifested in the practice of charity.

It is necessary to nurture our relationship with God to make it more intense and vibrant: by participating in the sacraments (especially the Eucharist and Penance), by cultivating a life of greater intimacy through prayer and the reading of Sacred Scripture, or by practicing charity through the works of mercy. He comes out to meet us; we must welcome Him into our very being.

With our gaze fixed on the Ascension and Pentecost, the Gospel also reminds us that Christ has conquered death. Jesus Christ has truly risen. We are still in the Easter season. Jesus reminds us that He has conquered the world (cf. Jn 16:33). If we were to compare this to the world of sports, it would be like playing a match that we already know has been won. This does not mean that there are no dangers; it does not mean that there is no need to make an effort. Even though there is still time left in the match—and we will have to sweat and suffer—we know that the victory is ours.

Always hand in hand with Mary! She is filled with the Holy Spirit; she lived a life of great intimacy with Christ, carried Him within her for nine months, listened to Him throughout the years, and accompanied the disciples in receiving the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Throughout this time which elapsed between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, God's Providence had this in view, to teach and impress upon both the eyes and hearts of His own people that the Lord Jesus Christ might be acknowledged to have as truly risen, as He was truly born, suffered, and died” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “It is necessary here to understand properly the secret of the unfathomable joy which dwells in Jesus and which is special to Him. If Jesus radiates such peace, such assurance, such happiness, such availability, it is by reason of the inexpressible love by which He knows that He is loved by His Father” (Saint Paul VI)

- “(...) The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. (...) ‘In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world’ (Jn 16:33)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 1808)

Other comments

“Take courage, I have conquered the world.”

Fr. Jordi CASTELLET i Sala
(Vic, Barcelona, Spain)

Today we may have the feeling that the world of faith in Christ is weakening. There is much news that goes against the strength we would like to receive from a life based entirely on the Gospel. The values of consumerism, capitalism, sensuality, and materialism are in vogue and run counter to anything that involves aligning ourselves with the Gospel demands. However, this set of values and ways of understanding life provide neither personal fulfillment nor peace but only bring more discomfort and inner unrest. Is this not why, today, people walk down the street sulking, withdrawn, and worried about a future that they do not see at all clearly, precisely because they have mortgaged it for a car, an apartment, or a vacation that, in fact, they cannot afford?

Jesus' words invite us to trust: "take courage, I have conquered the world" (Jn 16:33). That is, through his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, he has attained eternal life, life without obstacles, life without limits, because he has overcome all limits and surpassed all difficulties.

Those of Christ overcome difficulties just as he has overcome them, even though in our lives we must also experience successive deaths and resurrections, never desired but assumed by the same Paschal Mystery of Christ. Aren’t the loss of a friend, the separation from a loved one, the failure of a project, or the limitations we experience because of our human frailty "deaths"?

But "in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us" (Rom 8:37). Let us be witnesses of God's love, because in us He “has done (…) great things" (Luke 1:49) and has given us His help to overcome every difficulty, even death, because Christ communicates His Holy Spirit to us.