Saturday of the Seventh Week of Easter

Gospel text (*Jn* 21:20-25): Peter turned and saw the disciple following whom Jesus loved, the one who had also reclined upon his chest during the supper and had said, “Master, who is the one who will betray you?” When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “What if I want him to remain until I come? What concern is it of yours? You follow me.” So the word spread among the brothers that that disciple would not die. But Jesus had not told him that he would not die, just “What if I want him to remain until I come? What concern is it of yours?”

It is this disciple who testifies to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.

“It is this disciple who testifies to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true”

Fr. Fidel CATALÁN i Catalán
(Terrassa, Barcelona, Spain)

Today we read the end of the Gospel of St. John. This is specifically the end of the appendix that the Johannine community added to the original text. In this case, it is an intentionally significant fragment. The Risen Lord appears to his disciples and renews them in his following, particularly Peter. This is followed by the text that we proclaim today in the liturgy.

The figure of the beloved disciple is central to this fragment and indeed to the entire Gospel of St. John. It may refer to a specific person—the disciple John—or it may be the figure behind whom every disciple loved by the Master can situate themselves. Whatever its significance, the text helps provide an element of continuity to the experience of the Apostles. The Risen Lord assures his presence in those who wish to be followers.

"What if I want him to remain until I come?" (Jn 21:22) may indicate this continuity more than a chronological element in space and time. The beloved disciple becomes a witness to all this to the extent that he is aware that the Lord remains with him in every occasion. This is why he can write and why his

word is true, because he reflects with his pen the continued experience of those who live their mission in the midst of the world, experiencing the presence of Jesus Christ. Each one of us can be the beloved disciple to the extent that we allow ourselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit, who helps us discover this presence.

This text already prepares us to celebrate tomorrow, Sunday, the Solemnity of Pentecost, the Gift of the Spirit: "and the Advocate descended from heaven, the Guardian and Sanctifier of the Church, the Director of souls, the Pilot of the storm-tossed, the Enlightener of the wandering, to preside over the combat and crown the victors." (Saint Cyril of Jerusalem).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Those days, dearly-beloved, which intervened between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension did not pass by in uneventful leisure, but great mysteries were ratified in them, deep truths revealed” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “It is no less challenging to follow Christ today. It means learning to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, growing close to him, listening to his word and encountering him in the sacraments; it means learning to conform our will to his” (Benedict XVI)

- “The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: ‘All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks’ (Second Vatican Council)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 1816)