Thursday of the First Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Mt* 7:7-12): Jesus said to his disciples; “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him. “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets.”

“For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds”

Fr. Joaquim MESEGUER García
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Today, Jesus reminds us of the need and power of prayer. We cannot understand our Christian life without being related to God, and in this relation, prayer takes a central place. While we live in this world, we Christians find ourselves on a pilgrimage road, but our prayer gets us closer to God, opens up the door of His immense love and brings forward the Heaven’s delights. This is why, our Christian life is a constant request and search: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Mt 7:7), says Jesus to His disciples.

At the same time, the prayer gradually turns a stone heart into a flesh heart: “If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him” (Mt 7:11). The best summary we can ask God can be found in Our Lord's Prayer: “Your kingdom come and your will be done, on earth as in heaven” (cf. Mt 6:10). We, therefore, cannot ask just anything in our prayers, but something, which is really for our own good. Nobody desires harm for themselves; therefore, we cannot want it for others either.

We, sometimes, fail to see God's concern for us, for we find our prayers seemingly unanswered or may even feel God does not love us. In such moments, it will do us good to remember this advice from Saint Jerome: “It is certain God gives to he who asks, that he who seeks finds, and that he who knocks will be opened: It is clearly seen that he who has not received, who has not found, who has not been opened, is just because he did not know how to ask, how to seek nor how to knock at the door.” Let us, therefore, ask God, in the first place, to give us a loving heart just like that of Jesus Christ.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “The Observance of Lent: to wash away in this holy season the negligences of other times. This we can do by devoting ourselves to prayer, to compunction of heart, to offer something to God of our own will with the joy of the Holy Spirit.” (Saint Benedict)

- “Without heaven, earthly power is always ambiguous and fragile. Only when power submits to the measure and the judgment of heaven—of God, in other words—can it become power for good.” (Benedict XVI)

- “Once committed to conversion, the heart learns to pray in faith. Faith is a filial adherence to God beyond what we feel and understand. It is possible because the beloved Son gives us access to the Father. He can ask us to "seek" and to "knock," since he himself is the door and the way.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, № 2609)