Monday of the Third Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Lk* 4:24-30): Jesus said to the people in the synagogue at Nazareth: “Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

”No prophet is accepted in his own native place”

Fr. Higinio Rafael ROSOLEN IVE
(Cobourg, Ontario, Canada)

Today Jesus tells us in the Gospel that “no prophet is accepted in his own native place” (Lk 4:24). By making use of this proverb Jesus is introducing Himself as a prophet.

A "Prophet" is someone who speaks on behalf of another, he who carries someone else’s message. Among the Hebrews, the prophets were men sent by God to announce, whether with words or signs, the presence of God, the coming of the Messiah and the message of salvation, peace and hope.

Jesus is the Prophet par excellence, the long awaited Savior; in Him all prophecies are fulfilled. But, just as it did happen at the time of Elijah and Elisha, Jesus is not “well accepted” among His own, for those who are filled with anger “rose up, drove him out of the town” (Lk 4:29).

Because of our baptism each one of us is also called to be a prophet. Therefore:

1st. We should announce the Good News. To do so, as Pope Francis said, we have to listen to the Word with a sincere approach, to let it touch our own lives, to let it retrieve us, exhort us, mobilize us, because if we do not dedicate time to pray with that Word, then we shall indeed be a “false prophet”, a ""swindler” or an “empty charlatan”

2nd. To live by the Gospel. Again Pope Francis says: “We are not asked to be flawless, but to keep growing

and wanting to grow as we advance along the path of the Gospel; our arms must never grow slack." It is essential to be sure that God loves us, that Jesus Christ has saved us and that His love is forever.

3rd. As disciples of Jesus, we must be aware that just as Jesus experienced rejection, anger and being driven out; this will also be present on the horizon of our daily lives.

Let Mary, Queen of the prophets, guide us on our way.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Since God is good, and especially to those who are faithful to him, let us hold fast to him with all our soul, our heart." (Saint Ambrose)

- "A baby, a manger. Simple things, the humility of God, this is the divine way, never a spectacle. It will do us good in this Lenten Season to think about how the Lord has helped us in our life, about how the Lord has made us go forward, and we will find that He has always done so with simple things." (Francis)

- "Jesus Christ is the one whom the Father anointed with the Holy Spirit and established as priest, prophet, and king. The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ." (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 783)

Other comments

"No prophet is accepted in his own native place"

Fr. Santi COLLELL i Aguirre
(La Garriga, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, we hear Our Lord saying that "no prophet is accepted in his own native place." (Lk 4:24). These words —uttered by Jesus— have been for many of us —more than once— justification and excuse not to complicate our lives. But, in fact, Jesus Christ, only wants to warn us, His disciples, that things are not as easy as they may look and, more often than not, amongst those supposedly knowing us best, things may still become more difficult.

Jesus' assertion is the preamble of the lesson He intends to give to the people gathered in the synagogue and thus, open their eyes to the evidence that, just because they are members of the "chosen People" they have no guarantee of salvation, cure or purification (which will later be confirmed through the data of the history of salvation).

I said, however, that Jesus' assertion, for most of us, is too often, but an excuse not to “commit ourselves evangelically” in our daily chores. Yes, it belongs to those phrases we have all learned by heart and, gosh!, are they effective...!

It seems those words are recorded in our particular conscience in such a way that, when we should, in the office, at work, with our family or with our friends, within our closer social “milieu”, be making decisions understandable only in light of the Gospel, such “magic phrases” push us backwards as if advising us: —It is not worth your while to worry, no prophet is being honored in his own country! We have the perfect excuse, the very best of justifications, for not having to give testimony, nor having to stand by that colleague whom the company is playing a dirty trick on, nor having somehow to help reconcile that married couple, who are also friends of ours.

Saint Paul addressed, in the first place, his own: “He entered the synagogue, and for three months debated boldly with persuasive arguments about the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8). Don't you think this is what Jesus meant to say to us?