

Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent

Gospel text (Mt 5:17-19): Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.”

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.”

Fr. Vicenç GUINOT i Gómez
(Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Spain)

Today the different religions are highly respected. They all express man's quest of transcendence, of the great beyond, of the everlasting realities. And yet, in Christianity, plunging its roots in Judaism, this phenomenon is the other way round: it is God Who is in quest of man.

As Saint John Paul II reminded us, God wants to get closer to man. God wants to address him His words, to show him His face for He is seeking closeness with him. This becomes a reality with the people of Israel, people chosen by God to receive His words. This is Moses' own experience when he says: “For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it as the LORD, our God, is to us whenever we call upon him?” (Deut 4:7). And, even then, the psalmist says "He proclaims his word to Jacob, his statutes and laws to Israel" (Ps 147:19-20).

Therefore, Jesus, with His presence, abides by God's wish to get closer to man. This is why He says “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.” (Mt 5:17). He comes to enrich us, to enlighten us, so that men come to know God's true face and may enter in closeness with Him.

In this way, to ignore God's suggestions, no matter how insignificant, involves a very paltry knowledge of God that, in turn, involves being considered as small in the Kingdom of Heaven. Saint Theophilus of Antioch said: “For God is seen by those who are enabled to see Him when they have the eyes of their soul opened: for all have eyes; but in some they are overspread, and do not see the light of the sun.”

In our prayer we are aiming to faithfully follow the indications of our Lord. Thus, we shall have a greater closeness with Him and, therefore, we shall be considered big in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“Preparing man for his friendship with God, the Lord Himself did speak in His own person to all alike the words of the Decalogue; and therefore, in like manner, do they remain permanently with us, receiving by means of His advent in the flesh, extension and increase, but not abrogation.” (Saint Irenaeus)

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“Every precept reveals its full meaning as a requirement of love, and they all come together in the greatest commandment: to love God with all of your heart and to love your neighbour as yourself.” (Francis)

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“The Law of the Gospel fulfills the commandments of the Law. the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, far from abolishing or devaluing the moral prescriptions of the Old Law, releases their hidden potential and has new demands arise from them: it reveals their entire divine and human truth.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 1968)