

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Jn* 5:17-30): Jesus answered the Jews: “My Father is at work until now, so I am at work.” For this reason they tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God.

Jesus answered and said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, the Son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for what he does, the Son will do also. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes. Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to the Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation.

“I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of

the one who sent me.”

“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life”

Fr. Francesc PERARNAU i Cañellas
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Today, the Gospel speaks of the reply Jesus gives to those who do not look at Him with good eyes when He chooses to cure the disabled man on Saturday. Jesus Christ takes advantage of this criticism to emphasize His condition as God's Son, and therefore, Lord of Saturday. Words that will be used against Him the day of His trial at the High Priest Caiphas' house, when Jesus receives His condemnatory sentence. Indeed, when Jesus declares Himself to be God's Son, the High Priest cries out: “He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy; what is your opinion?” (Mt 26:65-66).

Quite often, Jesus had referred to the Father, but in every case by establishing a distinction: God's Paternity is different whether it refers to Christ or to the other men. And the Jews who were listening to Him did understand Him very well: He was not a Son of God like the others, but the relationship He claimed for Himself is a natural filiation. Jesus affirms that His nature and His Father's are the same, despite their being different persons. He states in this way His divinity. This is a very interesting fragment of the Gospel in connection with the revelation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Among the things our Lord tells us today, there are a few referring to all those that, through History, will believe in Him: to hear and to believe Jesus, is having already eternal life (cf. Jn 5:24). Certainly, it is not yet the definitive life, but we can begin sharing the promise. It is convenient for us to keep it well in mind, while we make an effort to listen to Jesus' word: The Word of God that will save us. Reading of and meditation on the Gospel must become a part of our everyday religious practices. In the revealed pages we shall hear Jesus' words, immortal words that open the doors of eternal life. In short, as Saint Ephrem taught, the Word of God is an inexhaustible source of life.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“By dying Christ submitted himself to the laws of death, but by rising he abolished them. So he put an end to the hold of death. From being eternal, he made it temporal. For That way, just as in Adam all die, so in Christ all would be will be brought to life.” (Saint Leo the Great)

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“Christ is a divine judge with a human heart, a judge who wants to give life. Only unrepentant attachment to evil can prevent him from offering this gift, for which he did not hesitate to face death.” (Saint John Paul II)

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“Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgement on the works and hearts of men belongs to him as redeemer of the world (...). Yet the Son did not come to judge, but to save and to give the life he has in himself. By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself, and can even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love.”
(Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 679)