Solemnity of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 15:3-7): Jesus addressed this parable to the Pharisees and scribes: "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance."

"Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep"

Fr. Pedro IGLESIAS Martínez
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Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. From time immemorial, people have been "physically" placing in their hearts the best and the worst of the human race. Christ shows us his, with the scars of our sins, as a symbol of his love for all people, and it is from this very Heart, where past, present and future History is revitalized and renewed, where we can contemplate and understand the joy of He who has found what He had lost.

"Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep" (Lk 9:6). When we hear these words, we always tend to place ourselves in the group of the ninety-nine upright who do not need to repent, and observe "from a distance" how Jesus offers salvation to others who happen to be much worse than us. Not at all! Jesus' joy has a name and a face: mine, yours, his... we all are "the lost sheep" because of our sins; so we better stop adding fuel to the flames of our arrogance, while we think we are fully converted.

We live in a time where the concept of sin is played down or is even denied, where the Sacrament of Penance is considered by some as something hard, sad, and obsolete. But the Lord, in his parable, speaks only of celebration, and He does not do it only here, but all throughout the Gospels. Zaccheus, after having been forgiven, invites Jesus to eat to celebrate his conversion (cf. Lk 19:1-9); the prodigal's father forgives him and offers a party for his return (cf. Lk 15,11-32), and the Good Shepherd rejoices for his found lamb that had wandered off the trail.

St. Josemaria Escrivá said: "A man is worth what his heart is worth." Let us meditate from Luke's Gospel whether the price —which appears on our heart's price tag— compares with the ransom the Sacred Heart

of Jesus has paid for each one of us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “And you, redeemed man, see Who is hanging for you on the cross; how great He is.” (Saint Bonaventure)

- “The very core of Christianity is expressed in the heart of Jesus: the Love that saves us and even now makes us live in the eternity of God.” (Benedict XVI)

- “The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners. The angel announced to Joseph: ‘You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins’ (Mt 1:21). The same is true of the Eucharist, the sacrament of redemption: ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins’ (Mt 26:28).” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 1846)