

Monday of the Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 8,18-22): When Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other shore. A scribe approached and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus answered him, “Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.” Another of his disciples said to him, “Lord, let me go first and bury my father.” But Jesus answered him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.”

«Follow me»

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Today, the Gospel presents us —through two characters— a quality the good disciple of Jesus must have: a detachment from material goods. Before that St. Matthew's Gospel points out to a detail I would not like to overlook: “When Jesus saw a crowd around him...” (Mt 8:18). Crowds gather around the Lord to listen to his words, to be healed of their material and spiritual sicknesses; they are seeking their salvation and a breath of eternal Life amidst a world in conflict.

As at that time, something similar happens in today's world: more or less consciously, all of us need God's help, to satiate our heart with true spiritual goods, such as a better knowledge of Jesus Christ and a life of friendship and love for Him. Otherwise, we risk tumbling into the trap filling out our heart with other “gods” that cannot give meaning to our live: mobile phones, Internet, tourist holidays, a frantic work to make more money, a car better than the neighbor's one or a gym where to excel with the best figure of them all... This is what is happening to many people right now.

In sharp contrast, though, St. John Paul II's outcry to the youth resounded full of force and confidence: «It is possible to be both modern and profoundly faithful to Jesus Christ». For this we need to do as the Lord, breaking away with what may

link us to a much materialized way of life that serves no purpose other than closing the doors to the Holy Spirit.

“The Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head (...) Follow me” (Mt 8:22), says today's Gospel. And St. Gregory the Great reminds us: “We make use of temporal things, but our hearts are set on what is eternal. Temporal goods help us on our way, but our desire must be for those eternal realities which are our goal.” This is a good guideline to examine whether we are properly following Jesus.