Tuesday of the Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 8:23-27): As Jesus got into a boat, his disciples followed him. Suddenly a violent storm came up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves; but he was asleep. They came and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!” He said to them, “Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” Then he got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm. The men were amazed and said, “What sort of man is this, whom even the winds and the sea obey?”

“Then he stood up and ordered the wind and sea; and it became completely calm”

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Today, Tuesday the 13th of Ordinary Time, the liturgy offers us one of the most striking fragments of the Lord's public life. The scene is vivid, radically contrasting the attitude of the disciples and that of Jesus. We can imagine the turmoil that reigned on the boat when "Suddenly a violent storm came up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves" (Mt 8:24), but a turmoil that was not enough to awaken Jesus, who was sleeping. It was the disciples who, in their desperation, had to awaken the Master: "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" (Mt 8:25).

The Evangelist uses all this drama to reveal to us the authentic nature of Jesus. The storm had not lost its fury, and the disciples were still filled with agitation when the Lord, simply and calmly, “got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm” (Mt 8:26). From Jesus' rebuking Word came calm, a calm that was not destined only to occur in the turbulent waters of the sky and the sea: Jesus' Word was directed above all to calm the fearful hearts of his disciples. “Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” (Mt 8:26).

The disciples went from being confused and afraid to the admiration of someone who had just witnessed something unthinkable until then. The surprise, the admiration, the wonder of such a drastic change in their situation awakened in them a central question: “What sort of man is this, whom even the winds and the sea obey?” (Mt 8:27). Who can calm the storms of heaven and earth, and at the same time, those of human hearts? Only he who "sleeping as a man in a boat, can command the wind and the sea as God” (Nicetas of Remesiana).

When we think the earth is sinking beneath us, let us not forget that our Savior is God himself made man, who draws near to us through faith.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “He took His disciples with Him, and in a boat, that they might learn two lessons; first, not to be confounded in dangers, secondly, to think lowly of themselves in honour.” (Saint John Chrysostom)

- “Jesus does not want us to be passive people; He wants us to be active, responsible instruments, but at the same time, full of hope. This is the key to face the storms of life.” (Benedict XVI)

- “Filial trust is put to the test when we feel that our prayer is not always heard. The Gospel invites us to ask ourselves about the conformity of our prayer to the desire of the Spirit.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 2756)