Tuesday of the Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 9:32-38): A demoniac who could not speak was brought to Jesus, and when the demon was driven out the mute man spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” But the Pharisees said, “He drives out demons by the prince of demons.”

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."

“Ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest”

Fr. Joan SOLÀ i Triadú
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Today, the Gospel tells us about the healing of a mute demoniac, which provokes different reactions among the Pharisees and the crowd. While the Pharisees, faced with the evidence of an undeniable miracle, attribute it to diabolical powers — "He drives out demons by the prince of demons" (Mt 9:34)—the crowd marvels: "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel" (Mt 9:33). Saint John Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, says: "This statement especially bothered the Pharisees, because the crowds placed Jesus before everyone else—not merely before people who lived at that time but even before all who had ever lived."

Jesus was not concerned about the Pharisees' animosity; He remained faithful to His mission. Moreover, Jesus, in the face of evidence that the leaders of Israel, instead of caring for and feeding the flock,were actually leading it astray, took pity on those troubled and abandoned crowds, like sheep without a shepherd. The desire and appreciation for good guidance among the crowds was proven by Pope St. John Paul II's pastoral visits to so many countries around the world. So many crowds gathered around him! They listened intently to his words, especially the young! And yet the Pope did not diminish the Gospel, but rather preached it with all its demands.

All of us, "if we were consistent with our faith," says Saint Josemaría Escrivá, "when we looked around us

and contemplated the world and its history, we would be unable to avoid feeling in our own hearts the same sentiments that filled the heart of our Lord," which would lead us to a generous apostolic task. But the disproportion between the crowds awaiting the preaching of the Good News of the Kingdom and the shortage of workers is evident. Jesus gives us the solution at the end of the Gospel: pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his fields (cf. Mt 9:38).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “This divine heart is an abyss filled with all blessings, and into the poor should submerge all their needs. It is an abyss of lowliness to counteract our foolishness.” (Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque)

- “In the basis of this compassionate love Jesus healed the sick who were presented to him, and with just a few loaves of bread and fish he satisfied the enormous crowd.” (Francis)

- “Moved by so much suffering Christ not only allows himself to be touched by the sick, but he makes their miseries his own: ‘He took our infirmities and bore our diseases’ (Mt 8:17; cf. Isa 53:4).” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 1505)