Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 10:25-37): There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test Jesus and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

"A Samaritan was moved with compassion. He approached the victim. Then he lifted him up on his own animal"

Fr. Jordi POU i Sabater
(Sant Jordi Desvalls, Girona, Spain)

Today, we ask ourselves: "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). There is a story of some Jews who were curious to see their rabbi disappear during the Sabbath vigil. They suspected he had a secret, perhaps with God, and entrusted one of them with the task of following him. And so he did, filled with emotion, to a slum, where he saw the rabbi taking care of a woman and sweeping her house: she was paralyzed, and he served her and prepared a special meal for her for the feast. When he returned, they asked the spy: "Where has he gone? To heaven, among the clouds and stars?" And he replied: "No! He has gone up much

higher."

Loving others with actions is the highest; it is where love is manifested. Do not pass by! "It is as if Christ Himself were crying out in these poor to beg the charity of the disciples," the Second Vatican Council states in a document.

To be a Good Samaritan means to change plans ("he approached him"), to dedicate time ("he took care of him"). This also leads us to contemplate the figure of the innkeeper, as Saint John Paul II said: “What could I have done without the innkeeper? In fact, the innkeeper, remaining anonymous, did most of the work. We can all act like him, fulfilling our own tasks with a spirit of service. Every occupation offers the opportunity, more or less directly, to help those who need it (…). The faithful fulfillment of one’s professional duties is already practicing love for people and society.”

Leaving everything to welcome those in need (the Good Samaritan) and doing one's work well out of love (the innkeeper) are the two forms of love that correspond to us: “‘Which…in your opinion, was neighbor?’ ‘The one who treated him with mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Lk 10:36-37).

Let us turn to the Virgin Mary and may She—who is our model—help us discover the needs of others, both material and spiritual.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “How great and admirable a thing charity is. Let us pray, then, and beg him that, by his mercy, he allows us to live in charity” (Saint Clement of Rome)

- “The name ‘Good Samaritan’ fits every individual who is sensitive to the sufferings of others, who ‘is moved’ by the misfortune of another. Therefore one must cultivate this sensitivity of heart, which bears witness to compassion towards a suffering person.” (Saint John Paul II)

- “When someone asks him, ‘Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?’ (Mt 22:36), Jesus replies: ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets’ (Mt 22:37-40). The Decalogue must be interpreted in light of this twofold yet single commandment of love, the fullness of the Law” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2,055)