

Wednesday of the Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 18:15-20): Jesus said to his disciples: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the Church. If he refuses to listen even to the Church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault... Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

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Today, in this brief evangelic fragment, the Lord teaches us three frequently ignored but important ways to proceed.

Understanding and advice for the friend or colleague. To warn him, in discreet intimacy ("you and him alone"), clearly ("tell him his fault"), of his erroneous attitude so that he can revitalize his way of life. Eventually, if the first advice did not result in anything positive, to get also a friend's collaboration. But if even in this way his conversion cannot be achieved and his sin causes great scandal, we must not doubt to exert the prophetic and public act of denouncing that, today, may just be a letter to a publication's director, or a demonstration or a banner. However, this way of acting is very demanding for whoever practicing it, and

frequently, ungrateful and awkward. This is why so many find it much easier to choose what we wrongly call “Christian charity”, which is nothing but pure escapism, comfort, cowardice, false tolerance. In fact, “the same punishment awaits evildoers than the complacent who tolerate them” (St. Bernard).

Every Christian has the right to demand from us priests the forgiveness of God and his Church. At a given moment, a psychologist may appease your state of mind; a psychiatrist, through medical care, can defeat an endogenous disorder. Both can therefore be very useful though, at times, prove to be insufficient. For God only may forgive, remove, forget, smash while destroying, the personal sin. And only his Church can tie or untie demeanors, while transcending Heaven’s judgment. And, thanks to all this enjoy an internal peace and start to be happy.

In the priest's hands and words lie the privilege of taking the bread for Jesus-Eucharist to actually become immanence and food. Any disciple from the Kingdom may join another one, or better still, many more, and with fervor, Faith, courage and Hope, submerge into the world to transform it in the true body of Jesus-Mystic. And in his company go to God Father that will listen to our pleas, for his Son promised us so, “for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“In that silence, He will listen to us; there He will speak to our soul, and there we will hear His voice.” (Saint Teresa of Calcutta)

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“Faith is not simply an individual decision. By its very nature, faith is open to the ‘We’ of the Church; it always takes place within her communion.” (Francis)

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“‘Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us,’ (Rom 8:34) is present in many ways to his Church: in his word, in his Church's prayer, ‘where two or three are gathered in my name,’ (Mt 18:20) in the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, in the sacraments of which he is the author (...)” (Catechism Of The

Catholic Church, N° 1373)