Tuesday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 19:23-30): Jesus said to his disciples: “Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and said, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “For men this is impossible, but for God all things are possible.”

Then Peter said to him in reply, We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?” Jesus said to them, “Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

“It will be hard for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of heaven... Who then can be saved?”

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Today we reflect on the reaction stirred among the listeners after Jesus’ conversation with the rich young man: “Who then can be saved?” (Mt 19:25). The words of the Lord to that young man are undeniably strong—meant to surprise us, to shake us from our spiritual drowsiness. These are not isolated or accidental words in the Gospel; Jesus repeats this kind of message some twenty times. We must remember: Jesus warns us about the obstacle wealth can place on the path to eternal life.

And yet, Jesus loved and called wealthy men without demanding that they abandon their responsibilities. Wealth in itself is not evil—its danger lies in its origin, if it was unjustly acquired; or in its use, if it is spent selfishly without concern for the less fortunate, if it closes the heart to the true spiritual values (where there is no need of God).

“Who then can be saved?” Jesus answers: “For men this is impossible, but for God all things are possible” (Mt 19:26). —Lord, You know well the skill we humans have in softening Your Word. I have to say it, Lord: help me! Change my heart.

After the rich young man walked away, saddened by his attachment to wealth, Peter spoke up: —Grant, Lord, to Your Church, to Your apostles, the grace to leave everything for You.

“In the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory…” (Mt 19:28) —Lord, Your gaze is set on that “day,” on that future. You are a man with a tendency towards the end of the world, towards the fullness of humanity. In that day, Lord, all will be new, renewed, beautiful.

Jesus tells us: —You who have left everything for the sake of the Kingdom will sit with the Son of Man… You will receive a hundred times more than what you have given up… and you will inherit eternal life… (cf. Mt 19:28-29).

The future You promise to Your own—those who have followed You, setting aside every obstacle—is a joyful future, the abundance of life, the fullness of God Himself.

—Thank You, Lord. Lead me to that day!

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “For it is easier for the sun not to give heat, nor to shine, than for the Christian not to send forth light… Do not insult God. If we once get our own affairs in a right state, the other will certainly follow as a natural and necessary consequence.” (St. John Chrysostom)

- “The Christian vocation is first and foremost a call to love, a love which attracts us and draws us out of ourselves, towards its liberation through self-giving” (Benedict XVI)

- “The Church prays that no one should be lost: "Lord, let me never be parted from you." If it is true that no one can save himself, it is also true that God "desires all men to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4), and that for him "all things are possible" (Mt 19:26)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1,058)