

Saturday of the Twenty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 6:43-49): Jesus said to his disciples: “A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For people do not pick figs from thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ but not do what I command? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, listens to my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when the flood came, the river burst against that house but could not shake it because it had been well built. But the one who listens and does not act is like a person who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, it collapsed at once and was completely destroyed.”

“Every tree is known by its own fruit”

Fr. Raimondo M. SORGIA Mannai OP
(*San Domenico di Fiesole, Florencia, Italy*)

Today, the Lord surprises us by “advertising” himself. It is not my intention to “shock” anyone with this assertion. It is only our earthly publicity that lessens the great and supernatural things. What induces us to look at publicity with suspicion is, for instance, promises such as those assuring us that, within a few weeks, we will be losing five or six kilograms if using a certain “trick product” (or others to the same extent). But, when we have a hundred per cent guaranteed “product”, and —as

in the case of the Lord— nothing is being sold in exchange for money, and we are only asked to believe Him while considering Him our leader and a model of a certain life style, then this kind of “publicity” should not surprise us and can be accepted as totally legitimate. Has not Jesus been the greatest “publicist” when He said, “I am the way and the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6)?

Today, He affirms that “I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, listens to my words, and acts on them” is wise and “is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock” (Lk 6:47-48), for he now has a well built house, that can face any kind of weather. On the contrary, if the builder is not so sensible, he will end up in the middle of a pile of rubble and, if he was in the house when the flood burst into it, he may lose not only the house but his own life, too.

Therefore, it is not enough to get close to Jesus, but we have to listen, with the maximum attention, to His teachings and, most of all, to prompt them into action. For even the curious, the heretic or the history or philology scholar may approach Him... So only by coming close to Him, and basically, by practicing Jesus' doctrine, shall we be able to raise a building of Christian saintliness, as a paradigm for the faithful pilgrims and glory of the celestial Church.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

•

“The precepts of the Gospel are other than divine teachings, foundations for building hope, supports for strengthening faith, nourishments for encouraging the heart, rudders for directing our course, helps for gaining salvation.” (Saint Cyprian)

•

“Be prudent and wise, build your lives upon the firm foundation which is Christ. Then you will be blessed and happy and your happiness will influence others.” (Benedict XVI)

•

“(…) The precepts of the Decalogue lay the foundations for the vocation of man fashioned in the image of God; they prohibit what is contrary to the love of God and neighbor and prescribe what is essential to it (…)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 1962)

