

Tuesday of the Twenty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 7,11-17): Jesus went to a town called Naim and many of his disciples went with him —a great number of people. As He reached the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother and she was a widow; there followed a large crowd of townspeople. On seeing her, the Lord had pity on her and said, «Don't cry». Then He came up and touched the stretcher and the men who carried it stopped. Jesus then said, «Young man, awake, I tell you». And the dead man got up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. A holy fear came over them all and they praised God saying, «A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people». This news spread out in the Jewish country and the surrounding places.

«Young man, awake, I tell you»

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Today, two groups of people cross each other's path... One group escorting the death; the other one escorting the life. A poor widow, followed by her relatives and friends, is carrying out his only son to the cemetery while, suddenly, she sees a lot of people following Jesus. The two groups of people get together and they come to a halt, while Jesus tells the mother that was going to lay to rest her son: «Don't cry» (Lk 7:13). The crowd looked at Jesus, who was not indifferent to that mother's pain and suffering, but feeling deeply sorry for her, He brings her son back to life. For, finding Jesus is to find life, as Jesus said about Himself: «I am the resurrection and the life» (Jn 11:25). St. Braulio of Saragossa writes: «Let the hope of resurrection encourage us, then, because we shall see again those whom we lose here below».

In reading this fragment of the Gospel about the resurrection of that young man of Naim, we could emphasize Jesus' divinity and stand fast on it, by saying that only

God could have brought back his life to this young man; but, today, I would rather stress Jesus Humanity as, here, we do not see Jesus as a remote being, or as someone very different to us, or even somebody so important that He could not arouse in us the confidence and trust a good friend would.

We, Christians, must learn to emulate Jesus. We must ask God the grace to be like Christ for the others. How wonderful if others could see us as Jesus' very image on this earth! Those who saw St. Francis of Assisi, for instance, were also seeing Jesus' image. Saints are those that carry Jesus in their words and deeds, and imitate his way of doing things and his goodness. Our society need saints and you can be one in your environment.