

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 9,30-37): After leaving the mountain, Jesus and his disciples made their way through Galilee; but Jesus did not want people to know where He was because He was teaching his disciples. And He told them, «The Son of Man will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him, but three days after He has been killed, He will rise». The disciples, however, did not understand these words and they were afraid to ask him what he meant.

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, Jesus asked them, «What were you discussing on the way?». But they did not answer because they had been arguing about who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve and said to them, «If someone wants to be first, let him be last of all and servant of all». Then He took a little child, placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, «Whoever welcomes a child such as this in my name, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me but the One who sent me».

«The Son of Man will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him, but three days after He has been killed, He will rise»

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Today, the Gospel explains when Jesus was walking with his disciples, skirting towns, through a great plain. Nothing better to get to know each other than walking and travelling in company. Thus, a feeling of trust is easily built, and trust brings confidence. And confidence transmits love. And love dazzles and surprises us when we discover the mystery hiding in the most intimate part of the human heart. With

emotion, the Master speaks to his disciples about the mystery that gnaws at his heart. Sometimes, it is illusion; at times, when thinking it over, He is afraid; most of the time He knows they will not understand him. But they are his friends, He must transmit to them whatever He has received from the Father, and, so far, He has done so. They do not understand him, but when He speaks to them, which means love, they tune in with his emotion, an evidence that, even if they are so insignificant, they rely on Him to succeed in his project. He will be delivered into human hands, He will be killed and three days after He will rise (cf. Mk 9:31)

Death and resurrection. These will be enigmatic concepts for some; unacceptable axioms, for others. He has come to reveal them, to proclaim that the joyous consummation for mankind has already come, although to make it come true, He, the friend the elder brother, the Son of the Father, will have to endure the cruellest suffering. But, what a sad paradox that, while He lives this intimate tragedy, his disciples are debating who will climb on top of the champions' podium when they reach the end of their race towards the Kingdom. But, would we behave in a different way? He who is free from personal ambition is to throw the first stone.

Jesus proclaims new values. To win is not the important thing, but to serve; He will fully prove it at the culminant point of his evangelization by washing his disciples' feet. Man's greatness lies not in the sage wisdom, but in the innocent naivety of the child. «Even though you would know the whole Bible and all the sentences of every philosopher by heart, what would be its value without the charity and the grace of God?» (Thomas de Kempis). By saluting the sage we satisfy our vanity, by embracing the child we embrace God and we become spiritually infused by Him, by becoming more godlike.