Saturday of the Twenty-fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:43b-45): While they were all amazed at his every deed, Jesus said to his disciples, “Pay attention to what I am telling you. The Son of Man is to be handed over to men.” But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was hidden from them so that they should not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

“The Son of Man is to be handed over to men.”

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Today, more than two thousand years later, the story of Jesus’ passion continues to challenge us. That the Author of Life would reveal his surrender into the hands of those for whom he came to give His all is a clear challenge. One might say it wasn’t necessary, that it was an exaggeration. Time and again, we forget the burden that weighs heavily on Christ’s heart: our sin, the most profound of all evils, the cause and effect of putting ourselves in God’s place. What’s more, is the refusal to let ourselves be loved by God, and our insistence on remaining within our own limited categories and the immediacy of the present life. It is just as necessary for us to acknowledge that we are sinners as it is to admit that God loves us through His Son, Jesus Christ. After all, we are like the disciples: "they did not understand this saying; its meaning was hidden from them so that they should not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about this saying" (Lk 9:45).

To illustrate this: in Heaven, we might find every vice and sin except pride, for the proud person never acknowledges his sin and refuses to be forgiven by a God who loves us enough to die for us. Conversely, in Hell, we might find every virtue except humility, for the humble person knows himself as he truly is and knows full well that, without God’s grace, he can neither avoid offending Him nor respond to His Goodness.

A key to Christian wisdom lies in recognizing the greatness and immensity of God’s Love, while simultaneously acknowledging our own smallness and the wretchedness of our sin. We are so slow to grasp this! The day we discover that God’s Love is so close at hand, we will say, like Saint Augustine, with tears of love: "Late have I loved You,” my God! That day can be today. It can be today. It can be.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Do not be afraid. This cross inflicts a mortal injury, not on me, but on death. These nails no longer pain me, but only deepen your love for me." (St. Peter Chrysologus)

- "This faithfulness of his means that he acts not only as God toward men, but also as man toward God, in this way establishing the Covenant irrevocably." (Benedict XVI)

- "From the beginning of his public life, at his baptism, Jesus is the "Servant", wholly consecrated to the redemptive work that he will accomplish by the "baptism" of his Passion." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 565)