

Saturday of the Twenty-sixth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 10:17-24): The seventy-two disciples returned rejoicing and said to Jesus, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name.” Jesus said, “I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power ‘to tread upon serpents’ and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

At that very moment he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.”

Turning to the disciples in private he said, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

“At that very moment he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, ‘I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth’”

Fr. Josep VALL i Mundó
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, evangelist Luke tells us what brings Jesus to praise His Father for the benefits granted to Mankind. He rejoices for the revelation made to the very simple at heart, to the smaller ones of the Kingdom. Jesus shows His joy when realizing how they accept, understand and practice what, through Him, God tells them. On other occasions, when in intimate dialogue with His Father, Jesus will also praise Him for always listening to Him. He praises that leper Samaritan who, having been healed —along with nine others—, is the only one that returned, and with a loud voice glorified and thanked Jesus for the benefit received.

St. Augustine writes: “What can we better carry in our heart, or say with our mouth, or write with the pen, than these words ‘Thanks to God’? There is nothing that can be said so briefly, nor listened to with more joy, nor make you feel with more elation, nor done with more profit.” This is what we are always to do with God and our neighbor, even for those gifts we are not aware of, as St. Josemaría Escrivá used to write. Gratitude towards our parents, our friends, our teachers, our fellowmen. Towards everybody that may help us, may spur us, may serve us. And logically, gratitude also, for our Mother the Church.

Gratitude is not a very common or practiced virtue; nevertheless, it is one of the most pleasant to experience. We must admit, though, that it is not an easy virtue to live with. St. Theresa asserted: “I fully realize that this gratitude of mine is not in the least a sign of perfection: it must be my nature - I could be suborned with a sardine.” This has always been the saints' demeanor. And they have done it in three different ways, as St. Thomas Aquinas pointed out: first, through their own awareness of the benefits received; second, by praising God externally with words; and, third, by trying to pay back our benefactor with deeds, depending upon our own capabilities.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"It is not riches or glory that the heart of a little child demands; what he asks for is love. I can only do one thing: love you, oh Jesus!" (Saint Therese of Lisieux)

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"To whom does the Son will to reveal him? The Son's will is not arbitrary. The Son wills to draw into his filial knowledge all those whom the Father wills should be there. But whom does the Father will? Not "the wise and understanding," the Lord tells us, but the simple." (Benedict XVI)

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"... The whole prayer of Jesus is contained in this loving adherence of his human heart to the mystery of the will of the Father" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 2603)