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, St. Luke tells us of the moment that leads Jesus to lift His eyes in gratitude to the Father for the blessings He has poured out upon humanity. Jesus thanks His Father for revealing divine truths to the humble of heart, to the little ones of the Kingdom. He rejoices to see them receive, understand, and live what God makes known through Him. At other times, in His intimate dialogue with the Father, He also gives thanks because the Father always hears Him. He praises the Samaritan leper who, once cured along with nine others, is the only one who returns to give thanks for the gift of healing.

St. Augustine wrote: "Is there anything better for us to have in our heart, or utter with our lips, or record with our pen, than this? Thanks be unto God! No other phrase is more easily spoken, and nothing more

pleasant in sound, profound in significance, and profitable in practice, than this." This is how we should always act toward God and toward our neighbor—even for the gifts we do not yet recognize, as St. Josemaría Escrivá reminded us. Gratitude toward our parents, our friends, our teachers, our coworkers; gratitude toward all those who help us, encourage us, or serve us. And, of course, gratitude toward our Mother, the Church.

Gratitude is not a virtue often practiced, and yet it is among the most delightful to experience. We must admit that at times it is not easy to live it. St. Teresa of Avila confessed: "I am so grateful by nature that I could be bribed with a sardine." The saints always lived in this way. As St. Thomas Aquinas pointed out, they practiced gratitude in three ways: first, by interiorly recognizing the benefits received; second, by outwardly praising God with words; and third, by striving to repay their benefactor with deeds, according to their means.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "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)

- "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)

- "... 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, nº 2603)