

# Friday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (Lk 11:15-26):** As Jesus was casting out a devil some of the people said, «He drives out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the chief of the demons». So others wanted to put him to the test by asking him for a heavenly sign.

**But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, «Every nation divided by civil war is on the road to ruin, and will fall. If Satan also is divided, his empire is coming to an end. How can you say that I drive out demons by calling upon Beelzebul? If I drive them out by Beelzebul, by whom do your fellow members drive out demons? They will be your judge, then. But suppose I drive out demons by the finger of God; would not this mean that the kingdom of God has come upon you?**

**»As long as the strong and armed man guards his house, his goods are safe. But when a stronger one attacks and overcomes him, the challenger takes away all the weapons he relied on and disposes of his spoils. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me, scatters. When the evil spirit goes out of a person, it wanders through dry lands looking for a resting place. And finding none, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’. When it comes, it finds the house swept and everything in order. Then it goes to fetch seven other spirits even worse than itself. They move in and settle there, so that the last state of that person is worse than the first».**

---

***«Some of the people said, “He drives out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the chief of the demons»***

Fr. Josep PAUSAS i Mas  
(*Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Spain*)

Today, we are amazed to see how Jesus is preposterously “accused” of driving out demons «by the power of Beelzebub, the chief of the demons» (Lk 11:15). It is difficult to imagine a better deed —to expel, to rid their souls of the Devil, the instigator of evil— and, at the same time, to witness the most ignoble accusation —that he is doing it, precisely, by the power of the very Devil—. It is really a gratuitous accusation, which shows and reflects a great blindness and jealousy in the Lord's accusers. Today too, without realizing it, we tend to ignore the right other people have to dissent, to be different and to have their own positions, whether different or even in direct opposition to ours.

He, who lives cloistered in a political, cultural or ideological bigotry, easily despises the dissenting one and disqualifies all his projects by denying him any proficiency and, even, any honesty. Often, the political or ideological adversary becomes a personal enemy. Confrontation degenerates into affront and aggressiveness. This climate of mutual zealotry and violent rejection may then lead us to the temptation of somehow eliminating he who appears to be our rival.

In this environment is it easy to justify any attack against people, even, murder, provided the dead one does not belong in our circle. How many people are today distressed by this atmosphere of mutual intolerance and denial, which, more often than not, is to be found in our public institutions, our places of work or in meetings and political confrontation!

We must create, amongst ourselves, a climate of tolerance and mutual respect with the conditions for steadfast and loyal confrontations, where it is possible to seek different ways of dialogue. As for us Christians, rather than hardening and wrongly consecrating our positions by manipulating God's word and identifying him with our own attitude, we have to follow that Jesus who —when John prevented someone else from casting out demons in his name— corrected him while saying: «Do not prevent him, for whoever is not against you is for you» (Lk 9:50). Inasmuch as «the countless chorus of shepherds becomes the single body of the one and only Shepherd» (St. Augustine).