Saturday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 11:27-28): While Jesus was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.” He replied, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

“Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.”

Fr. Jaume AYMAR i Ragolta
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Today we hear the greatest praise Jesus could give to his own Mother: “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.” (Lk 11:28). With this response, Christ does not reject the heartfelt compliment that a simple woman gave to His Mother. Rather, He accepts it and takes it further, explaining that Mary is blessed—above all—because she was faithful in listening to and living out God’s Word.

Sometimes people ask me if Christians believe in predestination, as some religions do. The answer is no. What we believe is that God has destined us for happiness. God wants us to be happy, fortunate and truly blessed. Notice how this word keeps returning in Jesus’ teaching: “Blessed, blessed, blessed… Blessed are the poor, the meek, the merciful, they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who have not seen and have believed” (cf. Mt 5:3-12; Jn 20:29). God wants our happiness—a happiness that already begins here in this life, even though the path is not wealth, power, easy success, or fame, but rather the humble love of the one who places all hope in Him. It is the joy of believing—the joy of faith—that the convert Jacques Maritain once spoke about.

This is a joy even greater than the joy of life itself, because it is founded on eternal life, a life without end. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is not only blessed because she bore Him into the world, nursed Him, and raised Him—as that spontaneous woman in the crowd intuited—but above all because she heard God’s Word and kept it. She loved, and she allowed herself to be loved by her Son. As the poet wrote: “Being able to say “mother” and being addressed as “my son” is what God envied of us.” Let Mary, Mother of Divine Love, pray for us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "The Creator of man, in order to unite Himself to the human race, should choose nay, create a Mother whom He knew to be worthy of, and acceptable to, Himself" (San Bernard)

- "Who finds time to hear God’s word and to let themselves be attracted by his love? Faith in God demands a faith-filled surrender into the hands of the Love which sustains the world.” (Benedict XVI)

- "God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant forever. The Son is his Father's definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 73)