

Tuesday of the Twenty-eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 11,37-41): As Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to have a meal with him. So He went and sat at table. The Pharisee then wondered why Jesus did not first wash his hands before dinner. But the Lord said to him, «So then, you Pharisees, you clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside yourselves you are full of greed and evil. Fools! He who made the outside, also made the inside. But according to you, by the mere giving of alms everything is made clean».

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Fr. Pedro IGLESIAS Martínez
(Rubí, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the evangelist shows us Jesus at a banquet: «A Pharisee asked him to have a meal with him» (Lk 11:37). The host must have frowned when he realized his guest could not care less about the hand washing ritual (which was not a precept of Law, but just a tradition from the old rabbis) on top of frowning upon him and his social group. The Pharisee did not hit the right day, and Jesus' behavior, as we would say today, was not “politically correct”.

The Gospels show us that the Lord was basically uninterested in what “people might say” or in what may be considered “politically correct” behavior; we see in the Gospels that Jesus didn't care much for what people might say or what is politically correct, whether we like it or not. These are not criteria on which Christians should base their decisions. Jesus clearly condemns double morality, which clearly seeks convenience or deception: «So then, you Pharisees, you clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside yourselves you are full of greed and evil. Fools!» (Lk 11:39). God's word, as usual, questions us about customs and habits of our daily life, when we end up converting trivia into “values”, to disguise our sins of arrogance, selfishness and conceit, while attempting to “globalize” morals with political correction in order to avoid being out of tune or being marginalized, and this, irrespective of the price to be paid in terms of the soilure of our soul, as, after all,

everybody does the same.

St. Basil used to say, «he who is prudent must be mostly afraid of living pending of others' opinion». If we are witnesses to Christ, we must know that the truth will always shine through. This is our mission amidst these men we share our live with, while trying to keep us clean after the model of man God has revealed to us in Christ. The cleanliness of spirit goes far beyond any social forms and, if we ever have any doubts, let us then remember that blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. Each one must decide what he wants to see for all eternity.