Thursday of the Twenty-eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 11:47-54): The Lord said: “Woe to you who build the memorials of the prophets whom your fathers killed. Consequently, you bear witness and give consent to the deeds of your ancestors, for they killed them and you do the building. Therefore, the wisdom of God said, ‘I will send to them prophets and Apostles; some of them they will kill and persecute’ in order that this generation might be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who died between the altar and the temple building. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be charged with their blood! Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter.”

When Jesus left, the scribes and Pharisees began to act with hostility toward him and to interrogate him about many things, for they were plotting to catch him at something he might say.

“Woe to you who build the memorials of the prophets whom your fathers killed”

Fr. Pedro-José YNARAJA i Díaz
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Today, we are faced with the meaning, acceptance, and treatment given to prophets: "I will send to them prophets and apostles; some of them they will kill and persecute" (Luke 11:49). They are people of all social or religious backgrounds who have received the divine message and have been imbued with it; driven by the Spirit, they express it with signs or words understandable to their time. It is a message conveyed through speeches, never flattering, or actions, almost always difficult to accept. One characteristic of prophecy is its discomfort. The gift is bothersome for those who receive it, as it stings them internally, and it is uncomfortable for those around them, who today, thanks to the Internet and satellites, can reach the entire world.

The prophet's contemporaries seek to condemn him to silence, slander him, discredit him, and so on until his death. Then comes the time to erect his tomb and organize tributes, when he is no longer a nuisance. Today, there is no shortage of prophets who enjoy universal fame. Mother Teresa, John XXIII, Archbishop

Romero... Do we remember what they demanded and demanded of us? Do we put into practice what they showed us? Our generation will be held accountable for the ozone layer it has destroyed, for the desertification our waste of water has caused, but also for the ostracism to which we have reduced our prophets.

There are still people who reserve for themselves the "exclusive right to knowledge," who share it—at best—with their own people, with those who allow them to continue riding high in their successes and fame. People who block the path of those trying to enter the realms of knowledge, lest they know as much as they do and surpass them: "Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter" (Luke 11:52).

Now, as in Jesus' time, many analyze phrases and study texts to discredit those whose words inconvenience us: Is this our way of doing things? "There is nothing more dangerous than judging the things of God with the words of men" (Saint John Chrysostom).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “For those who are called sons, and are not sons, what profiteth them the name where the thing is not? So, many are called Christians, and yet in deeds are not found such; because they are not this which they are called, that is, in life, in manners, in faith, in hope, in charity.” (Saint Augustine)

- “Moral posturing is part and parcel of temptation. It does not invite us directly to do evil, which would be far too blatant. It pretends to show us a better way.” (Benedict XVI)

- “In all of his life Jesus presents himself as our model. He is ‘the perfect man’, who invites us to become his disciples and follow him. In humbling himself, he has given us an example to imitate, through his prayer he draws us to pray, and by his poverty he calls us to accept freely the privation and persecutions that may come our way.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, № 520)