Wednesday of the Thirtieth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 13:22-30): Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, “Lord, will only a few people be saved?” He answered them, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, ‘Lord, open the door for us.’ He will say to you in reply, ‘I do not know where you are from.’ And you will say, ‘We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.’ Then he will say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!’ And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out. And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the Kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

“Strive to enter through the narrow gate”

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Today, on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus pauses for a moment, and someone takes the opportunity to ask Him: "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" (Lk 13:23). Perhaps that man felt uneasy upon hearing Jesus. Of course, what Jesus teaches is wonderful and appealing, but the demands it entails are not quite to his liking. But what if he were to live the Gospel on his own terms—with an "à la carte morality"? What chance would he have of being saved?

So, he asks: "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" Jesus does not accept this framing of the question. Salvation is too serious a matter to be resolved by calculating probabilities. God does not wish “that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt 3:9).

Jesus replies: “Strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, ‘Lord, open the door for us.’ He will say to you in reply, ‘I do not know where you are from.’” (Lk 13:24-25). How can they be sheep of His flock if they neither follow the Good Shepherd

nor accept the Magisterium of the Church? "Depart from me, all you evildoers! And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth" (Lk 13:27-28).

Neither Jesus nor the Church fears that the image of God the Father might be tarnished by revealing the mystery of hell. As the Catechism of the Church states, "The affirmations of Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church on the subject of hell are a call to the responsibility incumbent upon man to make use of his freedom in view of his eternal destiny. They are at the same time an urgent call to conversion" (no. 1036).

Let’s stop “trying to be too clever” and being calculating. Let’s strive to enter through the narrow gate, starting over as many times as necessary, trusting in His mercy. "All that, which worries you for the moment," says Saint Josemaría, "is of relative importance. What is of absolute importance is that you be happy, that you be saved."

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “O hidden Jesus, Love eternal, You who are our life, O Divine Madman, for You have forgotten Yourself and see only us. Why is it that so few people know you? Why is your Love not requited? O Love Divine why do You conceal Your beauty?" (Saint Faustyna Kowalska)

- “The passage to eternal life is open to all, but it is ‘narrow’ because it is demanding: it requires commitment, self-denial and the mortification of one's selfishness.” (Benedict XVI)

- “The affirmations of Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church on the subject of hell are a call to the responsibility incumbent upon man to make use of his freedom in view of his eternal destiny. They are at the same time an urgent call to conversion.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, № 1036)