

Saturday of the Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 20:27-40): Some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, came forward and put this question to Jesus, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us, If someone’s brother dies leaving a wife but no child, his brother must take the wife and raise up descendants for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married a woman but died childless. Then the second and the third married her, and likewise all the seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. Now at the resurrection whose wife will that woman be? For all seven had been married to her.”

Jesus said to them, “The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise. That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called ‘Lord’ the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.” Some of the scribes said in reply, “Teacher, you have answered well.” And they no longer dared to ask him anything.

“He is not God of the dead, but of the living”

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Today, the Word of God speaks to us about the central theme of the resurrection of the dead. Curiously, like the Sadducees, we too never tire of asking useless and misplaced questions. We want to resolve the realities of the world to come with the categories of this world, when in the world that is coming everything will be different: “Those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage” (Lk 20:35). Starting from mistaken assumptions, we reach mistaken conclusions.

If we loved one another more and better, it would not seem strange to us that in heaven there is no exclusivity of love such as we experience on earth – something totally understandable because of our

limitations, which make it difficult for us to go beyond our closest circles. But in heaven we will all love one another with a pure heart, without envy or suspicion – not only our husband or wife, our children, or those of our own blood, but everyone, without exceptions or discrimination of language, nation, race, or culture, since “true love possesses great strength” (Saint Paulinus of Nola).

It does us great good to hear these words of Scripture from the lips of Jesus. It helps us because, shaken by so many things that leave us no time to think, and influenced by a cultural environment that seems to deny eternal life, we might find ourselves touched by doubts about the resurrection of the dead. Yes, it is very good for us that the Lord Himself is the one who tells us that there is a future beyond the destruction of our body and of this passing world: “That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called ‘Lord’ the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and He is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him all are alive” (Lk 20:37–38).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “The resurrected body cannot be aerial or ethereal: how can there be a true resurrection if there cannot be true flesh?” (Saint Gregory the Great)
- “ But already on this earth, in prayer, in the Sacraments, in fraternity, we encounter Jesus and his love, and thus we may already taste something of the risen life.”(Francis)
- “What is ‘rising’? (...). God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus' Resurrection.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 997)