Wednesday of the Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mk* 6:1-6): Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

“Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands”

Fr. Miquel MASATS i Roca
(Girona, Spain)

Today the Gospel shows us how Jesus goes to the synagogue in Nazareth, the town where he was raised. Saturday is the day dedicated to the Lord and the Jews gather to hear the Word of God. Jesus goes to the synagogue every Saturday and teaches there, not like the scribes and Pharisees, but as one having authority (cf. Mk 1:22).

God also speaks to us today through the Scriptures. In the synagogue, the Scriptures were read and, afterwards, one of the learned men commented on them, revealing their meaning and the message that God wants to convey through them. The following reflection is attributed to St. Augustine: “Just as in prayer we speak to God, in reading it is God who speaks to us.”

The fact that Jesus, Son of God, is known among his fellow citizens for his work, offers us an unexpected perspective for our ordinary life. The professional work of each one of us is a means of encountering God and, therefore, a sanctifiable and sanctifying reality. In the words of St. Josemaría Escrivá: “Your human vocation is a part — and an important part — of your divine vocation. That is the reason why you must strive for holiness, giving a particular character to your human personality, a style to your life; contributing at the same time to the sanctification of others, your fellow men; sanctifying your work and your environment: the profession or job that fills your day, your home and family and the country where you were born and which you love.”

He ends the Gospel passage by saying that Jesus “was not able to perform any mighty deed there (…). He was amazed at their lack of faith” (Mk 6:5-6). Today too the Lord asks us for more faith in Him to do things that exceed our human possibilities. Miracles manifest the power of God and the need we have for Him in our daily life.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “In God, power, essence, will, intellect, wisdom, and justice are all identical. Nothing therefore can be in God's power which could not be in his just will or his wise intellect.” (Saint Thomas Aquinas)

- “Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter, illuminates your life of Christian workers with his life of work. You also illuminate your work environment with the light of Christ.” (Saint John Paul II)

- “The primordial value of labor stems from man himself, its author and beneficiary. By means of his labor man participates in the work of creation. Work united to Christ can be redemptive.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 2460)