

Wednesday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 7:14-23): Jesus summoned the crowd again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.”

When he got home away from the crowd his disciples questioned him about the parable. He said to them, “Are even you likewise without understanding? Do you not realize that everything that goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters not the heart but the stomach and passes out into the latrine?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) “But what comes out of the man, that is what defiles him. From within the man, from his heart, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile.”

«Nothing that enters one from out-side can make that person unclean»

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Today, Jesus teaches us that God made everything good. But our intentions—which are not always right— may contaminate what we do. This is why Jesus Christ says: “Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.” (Mk 7:15). The experience of the offense against God is very real. And we Christians can easily discover the evil's deep mark in a sin's enslaved world. The mission Jesus charges us with, is to clean—with the help of His grace— all this contamination men's bad intentions have spread all over the world.

The Lord wants all our activities to be carried out well: He expects us to show in them intensity, method, science, know-how, eagerness for perfection, not looking for anything else but reinstating God's plan for Creation. For God made everything for man's benefit: “Purity of intention. —You will always have it if, in everything you do, you only look forward to pleasing God” (Saint Josemaria).

Only our will can spoil the Divine Plan. And we must watch that this is not so. Quite often we let in vanity, pride, despondency for lack of faith, impatience when our aims are not attained... This is why Saint Gregory the Great warned us: “Be not seduced by any flattering prosperity, for only the foolish traveler stops along the way to admire the beautiful landscape while forgetting where he is heading for.”

It will, therefore, be convenient to pay attention to how we offer our deeds to God, to always be aware of His presence and to frequently consider the Divine Filiation. Thus, all our days—through work and prayer— will be fortified and begin in our Lord, and whatever we start in His name will reach its desired ending.

For we can make great things if we realize that each one of our human actions is a co-redeemer when joined to deeds and actions of Christ.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“Be not seduced by any flattering prosperity, for only the foolish traveler stops along the way to admire the beautiful landscape while forgetting where he is heading for.” (Saint Gregory the Great)

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“It is in the human heart where the most intimate and, in a sense, the most essential plot of history unfolds.” (Saint John Paul II)

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“The heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live (...). It is the place of truth, where we choose life or death. It is the place of encounter, because as image of God we live in relation [with Him]: it is the place of covenant.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 2563)