Wednesday of the Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mk* 9:38-40): John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.” Jesus replied, “Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us.”

“Whoever is not against us is for us”

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Today, we hear a recrimination against the apostle John who sees people doing good in the name of Christ but without being one of His disciples: “Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.” (Mk 9:38). Jesus tells us how we should treat these people; embrace them and broaden our minds with humble spirit to be always in communion with them, sharing the same faith, going the same direction, that is, walking together on the path to the perfection of God's love for us and love for one another.

This way of living our vocation as one “Church” invites us to review in a peaceful and serene manner the coherence with which we live this openness from Christ. If there are others who annoy us because they do the same as we do, this means that the Love of Christ has not fully permeated us in all its depth. He asks us for the humility to accept that we are unable to consume the full wisdom and love of God. We have to accept that we are the ones Christ has chosen to let all mankind know that humility is the way to get closer to God.

Jesus went about his task since his Incarnation, when He brings us the majesty of God as close as possible in the smallness of the poor. Saint John Chrysostom says: “For He was not satisfied even with death and the Cross only, but He took up with becoming poor also, and a stranger, and a beggar, and naked, and being thrown into prison, and undergoing sickness, that so at least He might call you off.” If Christ did not miss any opportunity for we can live love with others, let us not miss the opportunity to accept those who live their vocation to be part of the Church in a different way from us, for “whoever is not against us is for us” (Mk 9:40).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "'Jesus said: Do not prevent him...'. In this He tells us not only not to oppose the good from wherever it comes, but on the contrary to seek it when it does not exist." (Saint Bede the Venerable)

- "Doing good is a duty, it is an identity card that our Father gave to all, because he made us in his image and likeness. And He always does good." (Francis)

- "Freedom makes man a moral subject. When he acts deliberately, man is, so to speak, the father of his acts. Human acts, that is, acts that are freely chosen in consequence of a judgment of conscience, can be morally evaluated. They are either good or evil." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 1749)