Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 6:39-45): Jesus told his disciples a parable, "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher. Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,' when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye.

"A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For people do not pick figs from thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks."

"A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good"

Fr. Johannes VILAR
(Köln, Germany)

Today there is a thirst for God, there is a frenzy to find meaning in one's existence and actions. The boom in esoteric interest proves it, but self-redeeming theories won't do. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God regrets that his people have committed two evils: they abandoned Him, the source of living waters, and dug cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that cannot hold water (cf. Jer 2:13).

There are those who wander between pseudo-philosophies and pseudo-religions —the blind leading the blind (cf. Lk 6:39)— until, discouraged, like Saint Augustine, with their own effort and the grace of God, they convert, because they discover the coherence and transcendence of revealed faith. In the words of Saint Josemaría Escrivá, "People have a flat, grounded, two-dimensional view. —When you live a supernatural life, you will obtain from God the third dimension: height, and, with it, relief, weight and volume."

Benedict XVI illuminated many aspects of the faith with scientific texts and pastoral texts full of

suggestions, such as his "Jesus of Nazareth" trilogy. I have observed how many non-Catholics orient themselves to his teachings (and those of St. John Paul II). This is not accidental, for there is no good tree that bears rotten fruit; there is no rotten tree that bears good fruit (cf. Lk 6:43).

Great strides could be made in ecumenism, if there were more good will and more love for the Truth (many do not convert because of prejudice and social ties, which should not be obstacles, but they are). In any case, let us thank God for these gifts (Saint John Paul II did not hesitate to affirm that the Second Vatican Council is the great gift of God to the Church in the 20th century); and let us pray for Unity, the great intention of Jesus Christ, for which He himself prayed at his Last Supper.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “In truth the most difficult of sciences is to know one’s self. Not only our eye, from which nothing outside us escapes, cannot see itself, but our mind, so piercing to discover the sins of others, is slow to recognize its own faults.” (Saint Basil the Great)

- “We receive a new way of being, the life of Christ becomes our own: we are able to think like Him, to act like Him, to see the world and the things in it with the eyes of Jesus.” (Francis)

- “The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col 3:14); it is the form of the virtues; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 1827)