Saturday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:33-37): Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow. But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the Evil One."

"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'"

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Today, Jesus continues his commentary on the Commandments. The Israelites had great respect for God's name, a sacred veneration, because they knew that a name refers to a person, and God deserves all respect, all honor, and all glory, in thought, word, and deed. For this reason—keeping in mind that to swear is to call God as a witness to the truth of what we say—the Law commanded them: "Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow" (Mt 5:33). But Jesus comes to perfect the Law (and, therefore, to perfect us by following the Law), and goes a step further: "Do not swear at all; not by heaven, (...); nor by the earth" (Mt 5:34). It's not that swearing is evil in and of itself, but certain conditions are necessary for the oath to be lawful; for example, that there be a just, grave, and serious cause (a trial, for example), and that what is sworn must be true and good.

But the Lord tells us even more: "Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No'" (Mt 5:37). In other words, He invites us to live truthfully in every situation, to conform our thoughts, our words, and our actions to the truth. And what is truth? It is the great question, which we already see posed in the Gospel by Pilate, during the trial of Jesus, and to which so many thinkers throughout the ages have sought to answer. God is Truth. Whoever lives pleasing God, fulfilling His Commandments, lives in Truth. The holy Cure of Ars says: Why do "so few Christians behave with one end only in view -- to please God? Here is the reason, (...). It is just that the vast majority of Christians are enveloped in the most shocking ignorance(...). Ah, dear Lord, how many good works are lost for Heaven!" We must reflect on this.

It is in our best interest to educate ourselves, read the Gospel and the Catechism, and then live according to what we've learned.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “If you administer the sacraments, my brother, meditate upon what you are doing. If you celebrate Mass, meditate on what you are offering. If you recite the psalms in choir, meditate to whom and of what you are speaking. If you are guiding souls, meditate in whose blood they have been cleansed. And let all be done among you in charity.” (Saint Charles Borromeo)

- “We are called to establish among ourselves, in our families and in our communities, a climate of clarity and mutual trust, so that we can be considered sincere without resorting to greater tactics in order to be believed.” (Francis)

- “A person commits perjury when he makes a promise under oath with no intention of keeping it, or when after promising on oath he does not keep it. Perjury is a grave lack of respect for the Lord of all speech (...)” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 2152)