

Friday of the First Week of Advent

Gospel text (Mt 9:27-31): And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed [him], crying out, “Son of David, have pity on us!” When he entered the house, the blind men approached him and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I can do this?” “Yes, Lord,” they said to him.

Then he touched their eyes and said, “Let it be done for you according to your faith.” And their eyes were opened. Jesus warned them sternly, “See that no one knows about this.” But they went out and spread word of him through all that land.

“Do you believe that I can do this?” “Yes, Lord,” they said to him.”

+ Fr. Josep M^a MASSANA i Mola OFM

(Barcelona, Spain)

Today the first Friday of Advent, the Gospel presents three characters: Jesus, and the two blind men who approach him, full of faith and with hopeful hearts. They have heard about him, about his tenderness towards the sick and about his power. These features identified him as the Messiah. Who could help them better than the Son of Man?

Both blind men help each other and, together, address Jesus. The two of them, in unison, make a petition asking Jesus, who they call “Son of David”, for compassion: “Son of David, have pity on us!” (Mt 9:27).

Jesus challenges their faith: “Do you believe that I can do this?” (Mt 9:28). If they have approached the Lord it is precisely because they believe in him. In chorus they make a beautiful profession of faith, replying: “Lord, we do believe in you”. And Jesus gives sight to those who could already see through faith. To believe is to see with interior eyes.

This time of Advent is appropriate for seeking out Jesus with a strong will, like

both blind men, in community, as a Church. With the Church we call on the Spirit: “Please come, Jesus Christ our Lord” (cf. Ap 22:17-20). Jesus comes with the power to open the eyes of our heart, to make us see, to make us believe. Advent is a powerful time for prayer: a time for petition, and especially for the professing of faith. A time to see and to believe.

Remember the words of the fable of the Little Prince: “The essential can only be seen with the heart”.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“Teach me to seek you, and reveal yourself to me as I seek, because I can neither seek you if you do not teach me how, nor find you unless you reveal yourself. Let me seek you in desiring you; let me desire you in seeking you; let me find you in loving you; let me love you in finding you.” (St. Anselm)

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“Jesus himself, when he taught his disciples how to pray, told them to pray like the bothersome friend. Praying is a little like bothering God so that he listens to us. It is a matter of drawing God’s eyes and heart to us.” (Francis)

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“The urgent request of the blind men, ‘Have mercy on us, Son of David’ (Mt 9:27) or ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’ (Mk 10:48) has-been renewed in the traditional prayer to Jesus known as the Jesus Prayer: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!’ Healing infirmities or forgiving sins, Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: ‘Your faith has made you well; go in peace.’” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 2616)