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.”

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Today, on this first Friday of Advent, the Gospel presents us with three figures: Jesus at the center of the scene, and two blind men who approach him full of faith and hopeful hearts. They had heard about him, about his tenderness toward the sick and his power. These traits identified him as the Messiah. Who better than him could take care of their misfortune?

The two blind men join forces and, as a community, they both head towards Jesus. In unison, they offer a prayer of petition to the One sent by God, the Messiah, whom they call “Son of David.” With their prayer, they want to evoke Jesus’ 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 Messenger of God, it is precisely because they believe in Him. With one voice, they make a beautiful profession of faith, responding: “Yes, Lord” (Ibid.). And Jesus grants sight to those who already saw through faith. Indeed, to believe is to see with the eyes of our inner being.

This Advent season is the right time, also for us, to seek Jesus with great desire, like the two blind men, building community, building Church. With the Church, we proclaim in the Holy Spirit: “Come, Lord Jesus” (cf. Rev 22:17-20). Jesus comes with His power to fully open the eyes of our hearts, and to enable us to see, to believe. Advent is a powerful time of prayer: a time for prayers of petition, and above all, prayers of profession of faith. A time to see and to believe.

Let us remember the words of “The Little Prince”: “It is only with the heart that one can see what is

essential.”

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “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)

- “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)

- “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, Nº 2616)