Saturday of the Second Week of Advent

Gospel text (*Mt* 17:10-13): As they were coming down from the mountain, the disciples then asked Jesus, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” He said in reply, “Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

“Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased”

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Today, Jesus speaks with the disciples as he comes down from the mountain where they have witnessed the Transfiguration. The Lord did not accept Peter's proposal to stay, and he comes down answering the disciples' questions. They, who have just briefly shared in the glory of God, are surprised and do not understand that the Messiah has already arrived without the prophet Elijah having come first to prepare everything.

It turns out that the preparation has already been made. "But I tell you that Elijah has already come" (Mt 17:12): John the Baptist has prepared the way. But the people of the world do not recognize the people of God, nor do the prophets of the world recognize the prophets of God, nor do the arrogant of the Earth recognize the divinity of Jesus Christ.

A new way of seeing and a new heart are necessary to recognize God's ways and to respond with generosity and joy to the demanding call of his messengers. Not everyone is willing to understand this, and even fewer are willing to live it. Moreover, our lives and our plans may be in opposition to the Lord's will. An opposition that can even turn into a struggle and rejection of our Heavenly Father.

We need to discover the intense love that guides God's plans for us, and if we are consistent with the faith and morals that Jesus reveals to us, we should not be surprised by mistreatment, slander, and persecution. Being on the right path does not spare us from life's difficulties, and despite suffering, He teaches us to continue.

To the Mother of Jesus, Queen of the Apostles, we ask her to intercede so that no one will lack friends who, like the prophets, proclaim the Good News of salvation brought to us by the birth of Jesus Christ. We have the mission, you and I, to ensure that this Christmas is lived more Christianly by the people we meet

along our path.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “It is intolerable for love not to see the object of its longing. That is why whatever reward they merited was nothing to the saints if they could not see the Lord. It gave Moses the temerity to say: If I have found favor in your eyes, show me your face.” (St Peter Chrysologus)

- “Elijah was granted a transformed version of the Sinai experience: He experienced God passing by, not in the storm or in the fire or in the earthquake, but in the still small breeze. That transformation is completed here. God’s power is now revealed in his mildness, his greatness in his simplicity and closeness.” (Benedict XVI)

- “John is ‘Elijah (who) must come.’ (Mt 17:10-13). The fire of the Spirit dwells in him and makes him the forerunner of the coming Lord. In John, the precursor, the Holy Spirit completes the work of ‘[making] ready a people prepared for the Lord.’ (Lk 1:17).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 718)