

Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent

Gospel text (Lk 7:18b-23): The disciples of John told him about all these things. John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” When the men came to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?’”

At that time he cured many of their diseases, sufferings, and evil spirits; he also granted sight to many who were blind. And he said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.”

“The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed...”

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Today, if ever we realize we do not know what to expect of our life; when, at times, we lose our hopes and do not dare to look beyond our own shortcomings; when we are glad to be faithful to Jesus Christ and, at the same time, we are fretful or feeling low for not savoring the fruits of our apostolic mission, the Lord wants us to ask ourselves, as John the Baptist did: “Should we look for another?” (Lk 7:20).

Sure enough, the Lord is “smart”, and He wants to take advantage of our uncertainty—which is quite normal— so that we can completely examine our life, and detect our failings, our darkness, our wickedness... thus, being able to strengthen our faith and “endlessly” multiply our expectations.

The Lord has no limits when it comes to accomplish His mission: “The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed...” (Lk 7:22). Where are my hopes placed? Where is my joy resting? Because our hopes and our interior joy are intimately related. It goes without saying that Christians must, of course, live like any other normal person, but they must always keep their eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, who will never fail us. No Christian can live his life by ignoring Christ's life and His Gospel. Let us center our gaze upon Him, Almighty, and let us set no limits to our hopes. “You will find in Him much more than you can ask for or desire” (St. John of the Cross).

Liturgy is not a “sacred game”, and our Church gives us this time of Advent because the Church wants each believer to revive in Christ the virtue of hope in his life. Quite often, we lose it because we tend to excessively trust our own forces and do not wish to see ourselves as an “ailing child” in need of the Lord's healing hand. But this is how it must be, and since He knows us well and is fully aware we are all made from the same “material”, He offers us His helping hand. —Thanks, O Lord, for rescuing me out of the mud and fill up my heart with hope.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Our hearts should be as much prepared for the coming of Christ as if he were still to come into this world.” (Saint Charles Borromeo)
- “‘He must increase, but I must decrease’. This is John’s most difficult milestone, because the Lord had a manner that he hadn’t imagined. Because the Messiah has an easy-going style.” (Francis)
- “When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviors’ first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: ‘He must increase, but I must decrease’ (Jn 3:30)” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N^o 524)