Christmas Weekday: January 5th

Gospel text (*Jn* 1:43-51): Jesus decided to go to Galilee, and he found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth.” But Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him.” Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.” Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this.” And he said to him, “Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

“Come and see”

Fr. Rafel FELIPE i Freije
(Girona, Spain)

Today, Philip teaches us an important lesson when he asks Nathaniel to go with him to meet the Master, because, like all true friends, he wants to share the treasure he has discovered: “We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth” (Jn 1:45). He is impatient to share the riches of Jesus with others, so that the treasure that comes to all that know Jesus Christ, also can bless them. No one is able to fill a man's heart with the happiness and peace that is ours when Jesus dwells within. When we experience His love, peace, and blessing in our lives, we are eager to share Him. This restless urge to share what we have with others is the origin of the calling of a Christian Apostle. At some point in our lives, Jesus bids us to cast our nets wide. When He does, He is telling each one of us that we must become fishers of people, for the people of the world are in great need of God, and our common hunger for spiritual fulfillment, truth, and happiness can only be satisfied by Jesus Christ. “Only Jesus Christ means everything for us… Happy is the man who waits for Him!” (Saint Ambrose).

We cannot give what we do not have. So, before we can tell others about the Master, we must already have encountered Him and come to know Him. Only when we know Him well and have allowed Him to enter into and direct our lives, can we share Him with others, as Philip did, and as His disciples have done throughout history.

This involves knowing Jesus as the Lord of our lives, knowing Him as a friend, conversing with Him, and accepting Him so completely that we can declare: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel” (Jn 1:49). We must receive Him in the Eucharist, share our gratitude and our desires with Him in daily prayer, and listen intently to His declarations of forgiveness. All this will help us to know Him well enough to be able to speak of Him with others to their understanding, so that they too can discover that intimate joy of encountering our Lord, experience religious satisfaction, and come to love Him even as we love Him.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “At the moment of the immolation [consecration], at the sound of the priest’s voice, the heavens stand open and choirs of angels are present at the mystery of Jesus Christ. There at the altar the lowliest is united with the most sublime, earth is joined to heaven, the visible and invisible somehow merge into one.” (Saint Gregory the Great)

- “The smile of a family can overcome this desertification of our cities. The Babel project builds lifeless skyscrapers. The Spirit of God instead makes the desert fruitful.” (Francis)

- “The Father's only Son, conceived as man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, is "Christ", that is to say, anointed by the Holy Spirit, from the beginning of his human existence, though the manifestation of this fact takes place only progressively: to the shepherds, to the magi, to John the Baptist, to the disciples. Thus the whole life of Jesus Christ will make manifest ‘how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power’ (Acts 10:38).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, № 486)