

Friday after Epiphany

Gospel text (Lk 5:12-16): It happened that there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where he was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, “Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean.” Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, “I do will it. Be made clean.” And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray.

“The report about him spread all the more”

Fr. Santi COLLELL i Aguirre
(La Garriga, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, it is our responsibility to make sure that “the report about him” (Lk 5:15) keeps on spreading; mainly among those that do not know Him or who, for one reason or other, have moved away from Him.

However, this will not be possible unless we have not been previously able to identify our own particular “leprosy” and to approach Christ with our sincere belief that only He can deliver us for good from all our selfishness, jealousy, pride and bitterness...

Whether the news about Jesus largely spreads all over depends upon the “particular meetings” we may previously have had with Him. The deeper His Gospel, His love, His capacity to listen, to shelter, to forgive, to accept the other (no matter how different he or she may be) reaches into our hearts, the better we shall be able to spread His name around us.

The leper of the Gospel we read today about in the Eucharist is someone who has made a double exercise of humility. To recognize his own ailments and to accept Jesus as his savior. It is Christ who gives us the opportunity to make a radical and deep change in our life. With His testimony of life and of New Life, Christ proposes to us a totally true and possible alternative against whatever impediment for loving is encrusted in our hearts and lives. The alternative of love, of tenderness, of mercy. Confronted by someone different, (the leper), Jesus does not run away, does not get rid of him, does not suggest that he instead, goes to administrations, official institutions or some “non-governmental organizations”. Christ does accept the encounter and offers the “ailing one” what he needs; i.e. cure and purification.

We must be able to offer all those approaching our lives what we have received from our Lord. But, first, we must have met with Him to renew our engagement to live His Gospel in the small things of our daily lives.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “He falls on his face, which is at once a gesture of lowliness and of shame, to shew that every man should blush for the stains of his life. His confession is full of devotion and of faith, for he refers the power to the will of the Lord.” (Saint Bede the Venerable)
- “Through his Mother it is always Jesus who comes to meet us to set us free from every sickness of body and of soul. Let us allow ourselves to be touched and cleansed by him.” (Benedict XVI).
- “Jesus accompanies his words with many ‘mighty works and wonders and signs’, which manifest that the kingdom is present in him and attest that he was the promised Messiah (Acts 2:22).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N^o 547)