August 8th: Memorial of Saint Dominic, Priest

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:57-62): As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, a man said to him, «I will follow you wherever you go». Jesus said to him, «Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head». To another Jesus said, «Follow me». But he answered, «Let me go back now, for first I want to bury my father». And Jesus said to him, «Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, leave them and proclaim the kingdom of God». Another said to him, «I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family». And Jesus said to him, «Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God».

«The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head»

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Today we contemplate how Jesus' recommendations were realized in Saint Dominic de Guzman. Son of a wealthy Castilian family that laid the foundations of his deep faith, he had a great desire to lead an intense Christian life, which is why he entered the community of the cathedral canons of Osma. While he accompanied his bishop to a mission in Denmark and in Rome, he discovered the ravages that the heresies of Cathars and Albigensians did among the people of God, and he saw clearly the vocation to which God called him: the study and deepening of Philosophy, Theology and Sacred Scripture to be able to preach to the heretics and the people, to convince and illustrate the faith to them. Thus, he founded in Toulouse a new form of religious order in which both study and poverty play a great role: it is the Order of Preachers, also known as Dominicans.

What Jesus says is fulfilled on Dominic and his followers: «Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head» (Lk 9,58), because itinerancy will characterize the life of the new order, given that the friars will not be held in a monastery, but may be transferred to other convents according to the needs. «Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God» (Lk 9,62). Always looking forward, Dominic did not fall asleep in the longing for sweet past times.

According to the writings in the history of the Order of Preachers, Dominic's ideal was this: "He spoke with God or about God." A very good lesson for any Christian.