

Friday's Gospel: Letting the Holy Spirit Act

Gospel for Friday in the 14th Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 10:16-23*)

Jesus said to his apostles:

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before

them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes.”

Commentary

Jesus warns us of the difficulties we will face as his disciple: we are

“sheep in the midst of wolves.” A Christian’s life is often not easy; it entails suffering, sorrow and setbacks. Today we live in an environment that is not Christian, just as in the times of the apostles. But we can’t use the environment as an excuse for not evangelizing.

In this situation, Jesus tells us the solution: to bear witness. So often we Christians find ourselves inhibited by an adverse environment that serves as an excuse for not evangelizing. Jesus knows that he is sending us out amidst wolves, yet he encourages us to be his witnesses.

In confronting the environment today, Jesus encourages us to do good. Violence is defeated by love, death by life. As Saint Josemaría said, “we have to drown evil in an abundance of good” (*Furrow*, no. 864).

Jesus encourages us to trust in the Holy Spirit, without fear of going against the current. This is a grace that we must ask our Lord to grant us. To be consistent in our life as Christians.

Faced with this apparent paradox of being sheep in the midst of wolves, Jesus raises our sights. We Christians have the help of the Holy Spirit, the help of grace. And God is more powerful than any pack of wolves.

When we are tempted to lose our positive outlook and feel dejected by the evil in the world or in our own life, let us raise up our prayer to Heaven and redouble our trust that God has overcome the world.

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