

Saturday's Gospel: Being Misunderstood

Gospel for Saturday in the 2nd Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (Mk 3:20-21)

Then Jesus went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, “He is beside himself.”

Commentary

Mark's succinct but informative narration says a lot with few words. Jesus arrives home, but he cannot rest even there. The crowd is anxious to hear his words and beg for healing, afraid that he might disappear soon from their lives. What a force of attraction Jesus' mere presence had! How his words must have struck people! What a deep inner transformation must those who listened to him with an open heart have experienced! It is the overwhelming force of holiness, of divine life, the same life that our Lord wants to enable all of us to share in.

The human body cannot last for a long period without food. We see here how the crowd's agitation even prevented Jesus and those with him from eating. But he gave priority to other types of nourishment. How well these words of his fit here: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do

the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, There are yet four months, then comes the harvest? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together” (*Jn 4:34-36*).

Saint Luke records for us our Lord’s ardent words: ““I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!” (*Lk 12:49*). Some people would have found this impossible to understand – among them, some of his relatives. It is hard when those who fail to understand the fire of love that burns in our heart are relatives of ours. But just as we imagine Jesus as always being welcoming and close to them, we live our faith with the conviction that the best way we can help them is by drawing a bit close to our Lord every

day, thus helping them share, through our love and prayer, in the gifts that Jesus offers us and to which we try to respond with humility and gratitude.

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