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Friday's Gospel: Gaining the Whole World

Gospel for Friday in the 6th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mk* 8:34 – 9:1)

And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For

what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”

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Commentary

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus reminds us that our first concern must be for what truly gives meaning to our lives and actions. Saint Josemaría wrote “What use are all the things of the earth, all that our intelligence and will can aspire to? What is the point of all that, if it is all

to come to an end and sink out of sight; if all the riches of this world are mere theatre props and scenery, and if after all this there is eternity forever, and ever? Men lie when they say ‘forever’ about things on earth. The only true, totally true, ‘forever’ is that which we say with reference to God. This is how you ought to live your life, with a faith that will help you to taste the honey, the sweetness of heaven whenever you think about eternal life which is indeed ‘forever.’”^[1]

Many people walk along the paths of life without considering their eternal destiny. Many other concerns occupy their time, without asking themselves about the most important questions in life. You and I too can live without a clear direction, busy in a great many tasks. Every Christian must strive to keep in mind the dignity to which God has called us, the unending happiness that is

promised us. We cannot go through life oblivious to the deepest truth about our being.

That is why prayer is so fundamental for us, pausing to talk with God face to face. In prayer we direct our actions to our ultimate goal, and also try to find ways to help so many people who walk through life like lost travelers. As Christians, you and I are called to awaken people's hearts, to show them the immense joy to which they have been invited.

The goal of every human being is to be happy. But happiness is not achieved by simply seeking what is most comfortable and desirable.

“What is needed to attain happiness is not a comfortable life, but a heart in love,”^[2] Saint Josemaría said, also when this requires real sacrifice.

“That is why I like to ask Jesus, for myself, ‘Lord, no day without a cross!’ Then, through God's grace,

our characters will grow strong and we will become a point of support for our God, over and above our own wretchedness.”^[3] —

^[1] — Saint Josemaría, *Friends of God*, no. 200.

^[2] — Saint Josemaría, *Furrow*, no. 795.

^[3] — Saint Josemaría, *Friends of God*, no. 216

Pablo Erdozáin

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