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Monday's Gospel: Giving our Life for Others

Gospel for Monday in the 15th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 10:34-11:1*)

Jesus said to his Apostles:

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s foes will be those of his own

household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

“He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me. He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward, and he who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”

And when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he

went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Commentary

The Apostles are sometimes surprised by Jesus' words: "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword." Proclaiming Christ's message is a demanding call that embraces one's entire life, including family relationships.

The reference to the conflict within families that Jesus' message can lead to recalls and fulfills the prophecy of Micah: "the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me"

(*Mic 7:6-7*). The goal is not to foster divisions but rather to put love for God above everything else, even though this sometimes requires sacrifice.

Following Christ closely in our lives can lead us to disappoint the expectations of our family or friends. But this shouldn't upset us. Our Lord uses these apparent disappointments to make clear that it is He who moves hearts, who guides us to the fullness of happiness in this world and the next.

Our Lord offers us the key to understand this mystery: "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me." Love for others is the pathway to love God. This is the commandment revealed at the Last Supper: "that you love one another as I have loved you" (*Jn 15:12*).

When it is more difficult for us to love someone, we can remember this truth: our love for God is made a reality in our love for our neighbor, not “as though it were Him” but as Him. Loving our neighbor is loving God.

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