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Friday's Gospel: Love Demands Everything

Gospel for Friday in the 3rd week of Lent, and commentary.

Gospel (*Mk* 12:28-34)

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your

strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that he is one, and there is no other but he; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And after that no one dared to ask him any question.

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Commentary

“No one dared to ask him any question.” This is how today’s Gospel ends, after the scribe asks Jesus which is the principal commandment, the essential one, the one that gives meaning to each person’s life.

Christ does not respond by giving him a theory or reasons. He presents this commandment as life, as a way of living. Loving God and others means interacting with God and others, making room for them, so that God and others become the foundation of our own life. And that is why those listening remain silent, because perhaps they do not dare to take the step.

It is one thing to find a person who speaks about the Love of God, and another to find a person who is the Love of God incarnate, and who wants to raise us to his level, to his level of Love, a self-giving without

conditions. Love demands everything: all of one's heart, soul, mind and strength. Jesus, the Love of God incarnate, gives himself completely and loves without reservation. He is the embodiment of this commandment.

In the Eucharist, we consume Him in order to be able to love as he does, with our whole hearts, without limits or half measures.

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