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Thursday's Gospel: I Want Them To Be With Me

Gospel for Thursday in the 7th
Week of Easter, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Jn 17:20-26*)

Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus
prayed saying:

“I do not ask for these only, but also
for those who will believe in me
through their word, that they may all
be one, just as you, Father, are in me,
and I in you, that they also may be in
us, so that the world may believe that
you have sent me. The glory that you

have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Commentary

The Gospel passage that the Church invites us to consider today is part of Jesus' priestly prayer during the Last Supper. We see Christ asking again for unity among all those who will believe in Him down through the ages.

A father of the Church commented in this regard: “all of us, once we have received one and the same Spirit, namely the Holy Spirit, merge with each other and with God. For although we are many separately, and Christ causes the Spirit of the Father and his to dwell in each one of us, that Spirit, unique and indivisible, unites those who are different from each other insofar as they subsist in their respective singularity and makes everyone seem to be one and the same thing.”^[1] —

The first fruit of this unity of the Church is the faith of all the baptized

in Christ and in his divine mission (cf. vv. 21.23).

Our Lord concludes his prayer by asking that all of us may accompany Him in Heaven and enjoy his glory forever. This time he doesn't use the verb "ask" but rather "desire," which shows that this request coincides with the will of his Father: that all may be saved and come to knowledge of the truth (cf. *1 Tim* 2:4). And He makes a final request: "that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Saint Josemaría remarked in this regard: "How well the early Christians practised this ardent charity which went far beyond the limits of mere human solidarity or natural kindness. They loved one another, through the Heart of Christ, with a love both tender and strong."^[2] — May we too strive to continue putting into practice the

same degree of love with those around us.

^[1] Saint Cyril of Alexandria,
Commentarium in Ioannem 11,11.

^[2] *Friends of God*, no. 225.

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