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Thursday's Gospel: Wanting to See Jesus

Gospel for Thursday in the 25th Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 9:7-9*)

Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen. Herod said, “John I beheaded; but who is this about whom I hear such things?”

And he sought to see him.

Commentary

The Gospels mention the strong impression that the figure of Jesus caused on those around Him: his bearing, his words filled with wisdom and authority, the miracles and wonders He worked, the astounding exorcisms through which the unclean spirits obeyed the Messiah's voice and were cast out.

Jesus caused astonishment and also the desire to come to know more about Him. Who really was the carpenter from Nazareth, a man without much learning, unlike the religious authorities of the people, but who knew so many things and displayed so much Majesty, with an authority never seen before?

For some, Jesus was seen as a prophet, like the famous men of God in biblical history. Maybe He was

Elijah or Jeremiah. For many, Jesus resembled the closest prophet they had ever known: John the Baptist, who had been imprisoned and beheaded by Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee.

In any case, today's Gospel passage shows us that even those who seemed furthest from God, such as Herod, were also interested in Jesus and wanted to see Him, even if only out of human curiosity. Jesus stirred up in everyone the eagerness to know Him and know more about Him.

Thanks to the Church and the Scriptures, we know a lot about Jesus' true identity. We know that He is the incarnate Son of God, the long-awaited Messiah who had to suffer and rise from the dead and thus enter into his glory (cf. *Lk 24:26*). We have received many more lights than those people who first encountered

Him on the roads and in the villages of Galilee. So it is only natural that we have a great desire to get to know Him better, to come to love Him more.

The Eucharist and the Gospel are sure ways to draw closer to Jesus and to come to know Him better.

Therefore we can follow Saint Josemaría's advice: "Get to know the Sacred Humanity of Jesus... And He will place in your soul an insatiable hunger, an 'uncontrollable' yearning to contemplate his Face. In this longing, which it is impossible to satisfy on earth, you will often find your consolation."^[1]

^[1] Saint Josemaría, *The Way of the Cross*, Sixth Station, no. 2.

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