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“May you not lack simplicity”

Look: the apostles, for all their evident and undeniable defects, were sincere, simple... transparent. You too have evident and undeniable defects. May you not lack simplicity. (The Way, 932)

29 November

The first Apostles, for whom I have great affection and devotion, were nothing to boast about, humanly speaking. With the exception of Matthew, who probably earned a

comfortable living which he left behind at the behest of Jesus, the Apostles were mere fishermen. They lived a meager existence, fishing all night to keep food on the table.

But social status is unimportant. They weren't educated; they weren't even very bright, if we judge from their reaction to supernatural things. Finding even the most elementary examples and comparisons beyond their reach, they would turn to the Master and ask: "Explain the parable to us" [1]. When Jesus uses the image of the "leaven" of the Pharisees, they think that he's reproaching them for not having purchased bread [2].

They were poor; they were ignorant. They weren't very simple or open. But they were even ambitious. Frequently they argued over who would be the greatest when — according to their understanding — Christ would definitively restore the

kingdom of Israel. Amid the intimacy of the last supper, during that sublime moment when Jesus is about to immolate himself for all of humanity, we find them arguing heatedly [3].

Faith? They had little. Jesus Christ himself points this out [4]. They had seen the dead raised, all kinds of sicknesses cured, bread and fish multiplied, storms calmed, devils cast out...

And did these men of little faith at least stand out in their love for Christ? Undoubtedly they loved him, at least in word... They are ordinary men, complete with defects and shortcomings, more eager to say than to do. Nevertheless, Jesus calls them to be fishers of men [5], co-redeemers, dispensers of the grace of God. (Christ is passing by, 2)

[1] Matt 13:36: *Domine, edissere nobis parabolam*

[2] Cf Matt 16:6-7

[3] Cf Luke 22:24-27

[4] Cf Matt 14:31; 16:8; 17:17; 21:21

[5] Matt 4:19

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