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Friday's Gospel: Whoever tries to save his life will lose it

Gospel for Friday in the 32nd
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 17:26-37*)

As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was in the days of Lot—they ate, they drank,

they bought, they sold, they planted, they built, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be on the day when the Son of man is revealed. On that day, let him who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away; and likewise let him who is in the field not turn back.

Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding together; one will be taken and the other left."

And they said to him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

Commentary

Jesus announces that the coming of the Son of Man will have a profound effect on mankind's existence. And to help his listeners grasp what those days will entail, he gives them the examples of Noah and Lot.

Noah was the patriarch who lived in times of decadence and falling away from God, so much so that the Holy Scripture uses harsh words in telling us that "the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart" (*Gen 6:6*), and thus the universal flood resulted.

Lot was the person who also found favor in God's eyes and managed to save himself when Sodom and Gomorrah suffered great catastrophes because of their sins (cf. *Gen 19:23-29*).

In both cases, Holy Scripture emphasizes that even in the most

critical moments, divine mercy is present, giving a new opportunity to those who truly want to correspond to his gifts. Noah and Lot had to leave many things behind to save themselves from the catastrophes. They saw the world around them changed dramatically, and they had to trust in the provident hand of the Lord in order to look towards the future with faith. Noah built the ark when nothing seemed to foreshadow the coming flood. Lot fled to another city when everything seemed to be going as usual around him.

In the Gospel, Jesus suggests to us that we need a similar faith in moments of crisis, in situations when everything seems to be falling apart around us. We realize that we have to make tough decisions, which will likely require some sacrifices.

Then is time to ask the Holy Spirit for light, in order to discern what things

are truly important and what things we should leave behind. In these crises, we discover what were simply human securities, which we can do without in order to open ourselves to the new reality that God wants to give us for our life.

“Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it” (v. 33). Leaving behind what is superfluous is not taking a leap into the void, but rather abandoning ourselves in the strong arms of our Father God, who wants only what is best for us.

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