

Meditations: Saturday of the Third Week of Easter

Some reflections that can assist our prayer during this Easter season. The topics are: living the Word of God in our daily life; seeing ourselves in Jesus through Sacred Scripture; seeking, finding and loving Christ in the Gospel.

- Living the Word of God in our daily life
- Seeing ourselves in Jesus through Sacred Scripture
- Seeking, finding and loving Christ in the Gospel

JESUS IS about to finish his speech in the synagogue at Capernaum. A few minutes before, some of those present had reacted with astonishment to the revelation that He would feed them his own body. Our Lord replies: *Do you take offense at this? Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before? (Jn 6:61-62)*. He has spoken of his flesh and blood as sources of eternal life; and now He underlines the importance of his words: *the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (Jn 6:63)*. Hence it has been said that the Holy Mass is celebrated at two tables: at the lectern of the Word and at the altar of the Eucharist. In each of these we are given nourishment from the Father: the teachings of his Son and communion in Christ's Body and Blood.

In order to better assimilate the riches in the Word of God, besides listening to it attentively in the liturgy, we should meditate on it frequently in our prayer, study it and strive to embody it in our own life. “God’s word, listened to and celebrated, above all in the Eucharist, nourishes and inwardly strengthens Christians, enabling them to offer an authentic witness to the Gospel in daily life.”^[1]

Saint Josemaría advised: “When you open the Holy Gospel, remember that what is written there – Christ’s words and deeds – is something that you should not only know, but live. Everything, every point recounted there, has been gathered, detail by detail, for you to make it come alive in the specific circumstances of your own life. God has called us Catholics to follow him closely. In that holy Writing you will find the Life of Jesus, but you should also find your

own life. You too, like the Apostle, will learn to ask, filled with love, ‘Lord, what would you have me do?’ And in your soul you will hear the clear answer, “The Will of God!” Take up the Gospel every day, then, and read it and live it as a personal guide. This is what the saints have done.”^[2]

THE WORDS that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (Jn 6:63). Jesus came to give us life in abundance. He left us the Holy Scriptures so that we could go ever deeper into their riches, and come to know Him ever more fully and thus to love Him above all things. “This is the love of Christ which each of us should strive to live in our own life. But to be *ipse Christus* – Christ himself – we must see ourselves in Him. It’s not enough to have a general idea of the spirit of Jesus’ life; we have to learn the

details of his life and, through them, his attitudes. And, above all, we must contemplate his passage through this world, his footprints, to draw from there strength, light, serenity, peace.”^[3] —

We can ask God for the grace “to see ourselves in Him,” as in a mirror. Saint Josemaría liked to put himself into the Gospel scenes, and recommended this as an effective way to grow in friendship with Jesus, to see our life through his eyes and react as Jesus would. Then, the fruits of contemplating our Lord’s life will emerge spontaneously in our own life and conversations. This reflection of Christ’s way of being will enkindle in our friends the desire to know more details about Jesus’ passage through this world: “It is essential that the revealed word radically enrich our catechesis and all our efforts to pass on the faith. Evangelization demands familiarity

with God's word, and this calls for . . . a serious, ongoing study of the Bible, while encouraging its prayerful reading.”^[4]

Saint Josemaría recounted an incident from his own life that happened when he was walking down the street reading the Gospel in a small cloth-covered edition. When passing by some workers, he heard them wondering what that priest was reading. And one of the men answered, also in a loud voice: “The life of Jesus Christ.” The supernatural conclusion drawn by the founder of Opus Dei was reflected in the second point of *The Way*: “And I thought, and I think: would that my bearing and my conversation were such that, on seeing me or hearing me speak, people would say: This man reads the life of Jesus Christ.”^[5]

THE HOLY GOSPELS are the book “that preserves the voice of Jesus for us; it is the source where our prayer best drinks in the waters of grace, where our desire for truth is fully satisfied with the light of heaven caught in the Master’s words.”^[6] We often prepare for Mass by meditating on the words found there, and every day we can read a passage from the New Testament and experience that Jesus’s words “are spirit and life” (*Jn 6:63*). Saint Josemaría advised: “to learn from him, you must try to know his life, by reading the Gospel and meditating on the scenes in the New Testament, in order to go deeper into the divine meaning of Jesus’ life on earth. We must reproduce Christ’s life in our own life. So we need to come to know him by reading and meditating on Scripture, and by praying.”^[7]

If we enter on this path, we will also learn to draw close to our Lord

following the example of the persons we see in the Gospel: to beseech Him with faith, like the father of the sick son; to listen to Him devoutly, like Mary in Bethany; to touch Him discreetly, like the woman with the hemorrhage; to follow Him wherever He asks, like the disciples. But, above all, we will learn from Mary and Joseph, the two persons who knew Him the best, to always fulfill God's will in everything. The founder of Opus Dei pointed to the supernatural path we can embark on in reading the Holy Gospels: "May you seek Christ. May you find Christ. May you love Christ."^[8]

Let us ask our Lady and Saint Joseph to obtain for us from God the grace to find his Son in Scripture, to come to know Him and follow Him. "Love Christ's Most Holy Humanity. And from the Humanity of Christ, we will go to the Father, with his Omnipotence and his Providence,

and to the fruit of the Cross, to the Holy Spirit. And we will feel the need to immerse ourselves in this love, in order to find true Life.”^[9]

^[1] Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 174.

^[2] Saint Josemaría, *The Forge*, no. 754.

^[3] Saint Josemaría, *Christ is Passing By*, no. 107.

^[4] Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 175.

^[5] Saint Josemaría, *Intimate Notes*, no. 521.

^[6] Saint Josemaría, Notes from a meditation, 30 May 1937.

^[7] Saint Josemaría, *Christ is Passing By*, no. 14.

[8] Saint Josemaría, *The Way*, no. 382

[9] Saint Josemaría, Notes from a family gathering, 18 August 1968.

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