

Meditations: Wednesday of the Third Week of Easter

Some reflections that can assist our prayer during these days of the Easter season. The topics are: we can go to Jesus throughout the day; God's plan for us; asking God to help us do his will.

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IT IS THE SABBATH and Jesus is preaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. He stirs up the interest of those present when He says that the work of God is a question of faith. The expectation grows when, as a sign to endorse his words, He offers them the bread from heaven. The dialogue reaches its culmination when He says: *I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst (Jn 6:35)*. And He adds: *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out (Jn 6:37)*.

The Father gives us his Son so that we may receive adoption as his children. But our going to Jesus is free; no one approaches Him out of obligation. "To go to Jesus: this might seem like generic and even obvious spiritual advice. But let us try to make it specific by asking a few questions. Today, in my work at the

office, did I draw closer to our Lord? Did I make it an opportunity to speak with Him? In the persons I interacted with, did I involve Jesus? Did I bring them to Him in prayer? Or did I do everything thinking only of my own concerns, rejoicing only in things that went well for me and complaining about those that didn't? In a word, do I live each day going to our Lord, or does my day orbit around myself? And what is my goal? Do I seek only to make a good impression, to protect my role, my schedule, my time? Or do I go to our Lord?"^[1]

Whoever comes to me I will never cast out (Jn 6:37). We have come to be with Jesus; we want to freely accept the Father's invitation at every moment. And we thank Him for the assurance that He will never throw us out, that He will always be at our side, on our side. Our Lord urges us

to begin and begin again as many times as necessary.

FOR I HAVE COME DOWN from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me (Jn 6:38). The path that Jesus traveled was to make the will of the Father his own. This is the blueprint for leading a happy life. For God is the one who desires, more strongly than anyone else, our eternal and earthly happiness. Cooperating with that plan is the surest way to strengthen our own happiness. Loving God's will is not a question of submitting to arbitrary rules, but of trusting in his immense desire to share his own happiness with us.

We should trust in this plan of God also in difficult moments. Here too our model continues to be Christ. "It

is not easy to fulfill God's will! It was not easy for Jesus either. He was tempted in the desert and also in the Garden of Olives where, with agony in his heart, He accepted the torment that awaited Him. It was not easy for some of the disciples, who abandoned Him because they didn't understand what doing the will of the Father meant (cf. *Jn* 4:34). It is not easy for us, since every day we have so many options on our plate."^[2] —

In moments of suffering we can remember that Jesus, with his human heart, suffered intensely in the Garden of Olives. The temptation of a disciple who seeks to please God in everything can sometimes be to struggle without putting their heart into it. While what we should do seems very clear to us, we may not have the same determination in our heart, nor do our affections incline us in that direction. Therefore we need to seek God's will also with our

heart. Saint Josemaría often prayed, with the certainty that no one wants our happiness as greatly as our Creator: “I want whatever you want, I want because you want, I want however you want, I want whenever you want.”^[3] —

“WHAT SHOULD I DO to carry out God’s will? First of all, ask for the grace to want to do it. Do I ask God to make me want to do his will? Or do I seek compromises because I am afraid of God’s will? And we can also do something else: to pray to know God’s will for me and for my life, to know what decision I should make now, how to handle my concerns, etc.”^[4] — This is also what Saint Josemaría tried to do: “Realizing that Jesus was expecting something of me, though I myself did not know what it was, I made up my own aspirations:

'Lord, what is it you want? What are you asking of me'? I had a feeling that he wanted me to take on something new and the cry *Rabboni, ut videam*, 'Master, that I may see,' moved me to beseech Christ again and again, 'Lord, whatever it is that you wish, let it be done.'"^[5] —

This way of acting of the saints shows us their familiarity with God, the harmony of desires that is the path to happiness. Therefore we can ask "our Lord to grant us, to all of us, the grace so that one day he can say about us what he said about those people who followed him and who were sitting around him: *Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother* (Mk 3:35). Doing God's will makes us part of Jesus' family; it makes us mother, father, sister, brother."^[6] — Jesus wants to let us share in his plans of salvation and love. He awaits our free, creative

response, and gives us the grace to carry it out. “Fidelity over time is the name of love.”^[7] —

Mary answered “yes” to God not only at the angel’s annunciation, but throughout her entire life, even in the sad and painful moments of her Son’s passion. Let us ask our Lady to obtain for us a sensitive heart that aspires to the great and happy life God wants us to share in.

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^[1] Francis, Homily, 4 November 2019.

^[2] Francis, Homily, 28 January 2015.

^[3] Saint Josemaría, Handwritten Prayer, April 1934.

^[4] Francis, Homily, 28 January 2015.

^[5] Saint Josemaría, *Friends of God*, no. 197.

[6] Francis, Homily, 28 January 2015.

[7] Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz,
Meditation, 19 March 2020.

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