

Friday's Gospel: A Look That Reaches the Heart

Gospel for Friday in the 30th Week of Ordinary Time, with commentary.

Gospel (*Lk* 14:1-6)

One sabbath when Jesus went to dine at the house of a ruler who belonged to the Pharisees, they were watching him. And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy.

And Jesus spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath, or not?”

But they were silent. Then he took him and healed him, and let him go.

And he said to them, “Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well, will not immediately pull him out on a sabbath day?”

And they could not reply to this.

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Commentary

Our Lord interacted with all sorts of people. He accepted the invitation to the banquet that Zacchaeus hosted right after his conversion. He also spent time with his closer friends, such as Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Bethany. And he didn't refuse to accept invitations to the houses of Pharisees, as we see in today's Gospel.

Jesus finds there a sick man, with the Pharisees watching attentively. For the Pharisees, the sick person is just an opportunity to test Jesus. Will he heal him on the Sabbath? How will he solve this problem? That poor man's condition doesn't seem to really concern them. But Jesus doesn't fall into the trap of his adversaries. He doesn't see this sick person as an excuse to hold a discussion about the law. He sees, above all, a person who needs his help: "Which of you, having a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will not immediately pull him out on a sabbath day?" By this question, Jesus suggests that the Pharisees have to completely change their perspective. The sick person is not a case to be discussed in a theoretical way, but rather someone to whom we cannot remain indifferent.

In Christ's way of acting we see how charity directs our eyes towards the

needs of a specific person. His is a simple and penetrating look, which does not allow itself to be trapped by prejudices or ideologies that often obscure the real needs of others. Charity leads us to connect with people and enter their inner world. Once that connection is made, it is much easier and more natural to find solutions to the problems they may be going through. As Saint Josemaría said: “Charity does not consist so much in ‘giving’ as in ‘understanding’” (*The Way*, 463).

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