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Wednesday's Gospel: Jesus' Proposal

Gospel for Wednesday in the
26th Week of Ordinary Time,
with commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 9:57-62*)

As they were going along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.”

To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

But he said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.”

Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

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Commentary

Jesus walks with determination towards Jerusalem, to fulfill the mission his Father had entrusted to him and that enkindles his heart: to open the gate of Heaven to all mankind. Seeing him pass by leads many people to react with daring: “I will follow you.” But our Lord’s answer is even more daring: “No one

who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God” (v. 62). These words recall the story of Elisha in the Old Testament. Elijah gives him time to leave behind his plow and go to say goodbye to his parents before joining him in his mission (cf. *1 Kings* 19:20-21). Now, however, we see that Jesus’ call is even more urgent, that we can’t waste time before responding.

Perhaps we have seen movies or series in which a crucial moment arrives when the protagonist must make a decision that will mark their whole life: do I accept the declaration of love I have just received? Will I say yes to the adventure that is being proposed to me? One’s life story seems to hang in the balance, and can take one direction or a totally different one. Something similar happens in this Gospel passage. Jesus makes a proposal that requires the commitment of one’s entire life. Also

today, the Master continues to call people to join him in his mission, to travel the roads of the world as messengers of his mercy. “Why don’t you give yourself to God once and for all... really... now!”^[1] It is the holy impatience of love.

We don’t know what the final response of these three persons in today’s Gospel was. Perhaps, after a moment’s hesitation, they followed Jesus. In any case, Sacred Scripture offers us a perfect example of a prompt, total, enthusiastic response: that of our Lady. When the Archangel Gabriel announces to her that God wants her to be his Mother, Mary asks how such a marvel will come about and then embraces her mission without a moment’s hesitation: “Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word” (*Lk* 1:38).

^[1] Saint Josemaría, *The Way*, no. 902.

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