

Commentary on the Gospel: Recognizing Jesus' Divinity

Gospel commentary for Friday of the 4th week of Lent. “I know him, because I come from him, and he sent me.” Lord, help us to believe more deeply in you, and grant us the gift of fortitude so that we may live each day as children of the Father.

Gospel (Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30)

After this, Jesus moved about within Galilee; he did not wish to travel in Judea because the Jews were trying to kill him.

But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near.

When his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but as it were in secret.

Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Christ? But we know where he is from. When the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from."

So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me."

So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.

Gospel Commentary

In this passage, Saint John shows the Israelites' uncertainty about Jesus' origin. They believed that the Messiah's origin would be unknown, and so it did not make sense to them that Jesus was from Nazareth. What they failed to grasp is one of the central mysteries of our faith: Jesus' divine origin. Their ignorance of this mystery lies at the root of their conflict with him.

This is not the first time Saint John mentions the hostility of the Jewish authorities (*Jn* 5:18), nor will it be the last (see *Jn* 8:59; 10:31–33). John wants to emphasize the freedom of Jesus, who, in obedience to the

Father's will, will hand himself over to his enemies when his "hour" arrives (*Jn* 18:4–8).

When Jesus says, "I come from him, and he sent me," he is underlining his identity and his divine origin. He is revealing an inexhaustible mystery to us. This is why they seek to arrest Him: his words strike them as blasphemy. Many of the Jews do not recognize Jesus' divinity, despite having seen his works and heard his words.

Recognizing the works of Jesus for what they truly are is the first step toward believing in his divine nature. Accepting Jesus calls for personal conversion: "Whoever wishes to understand fully and to relish the words of Christ must strive to conform his whole life to him" (Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, I, 1, 2).

You and I, each day, are invited to make this same free choice: a personal act of recognition of Jesus' divinity that brings with it profound consequences for our lives. It demands an inner transformation, because God's message reaches us and moves us to conversion. Let us ask the Lord for a deeper faith to recognize his divinity, and the strength to live accordingly in our daily lives.

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