

3. September 2019 „Gods mercy calls us for the ministry“

Pope Gregory the Great

2. Kor 4:1-2,5-7

Such by God's mercy is our ministry, and therefore we do not waver but have renounced all shameful secrecy. It is not our way to be devious, or to falsify the word of God; instead, in God's sight we commend ourselves to every human being with a conscience by showing the truth openly. It is not ourselves that we are proclaiming, but Christ Jesus as the Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. It is God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' that has shone into our hearts to enlighten them with the knowledge of God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ. But we hold this treasure in pots of earthenware, so that the immensity of the power is God's and not our own.

Normally we like to speak of God's mission, which has been given to us to proclaim the gospel or even a mission order.

Today we hear another term that invites us to reflect on the mission entrusted to us. Paul speaks of a ministry given by God's mercy. The Apostle certainly has his own conversion and the special circumstances of his vocation in his mind. He therefore understands how much God had mercy on him, that he was now given such a true ministry and was freed from his blindness to persecute Christians.

But we do not need the life of St. Paul alone to understand the concept of mercy in this context. On September 1st, in contemplating the virtue of humility, we included the word of the Lord that if we do all that is commanded of us, we should consider ourselves useless servants, for we have simply done what we have been entrusted with (*compare Lk 17:10*).

Today the Lord makes us understand that in fulfilling the mission of proclaiming the Gospel, his mercy is on work. We become not only servants of His mercy, which we carry to men through our lives and our word, but the call itself springs from God's mercy.

In fact, we are very weak people and very unable to proclaim the gospel in the right way. How much falsification and self-interest would suffer the proclamation if the light of God did not illuminate us. Even for the acceptance of the gospel, God's grace, and even more so to remain faithful to the Gospel, is needed. But God entrusts us with this great treasure in spite of our fragility.

The Lord wants to honor us with such a high mission and make us collaborators of His love. Thus he awakens our deepest destiny on earth and does not leave it broken in us. What can be higher for us poor and limited creatures than to serve God? Does he not have mercy with our indignity and incompetence and exalt us in such a service? "*He has looked at the lowliness of his maid*" (Lk 1:48) our Lady praises the Lord as she becomes aware of her unique vocation.

God calls out of mercy his limited creature not only to be the recipient of His goodness, but to make it known to man his goodness. If we understand this and thus receive an answer to our deep longing for something to be good and fruitful in our lives, then our hearts will be filled with gratitude and our zeal will not fade in the service of God. We do not then look at the troubles of service and do not dwell on the fragility of our earthly vessels, but always want to conform to this mercy of God. It would tear our hearts if we were no longer to do our mission through our own negligence and guilt, and it would be deeply embarrassing if we stopped openly proclaiming the truth because of human fear.

Thus, the concept of God's mercy, in relation to the vocation of the proclamation of the Gospel, opens up another dimension of God's love. In all things we are children of his mercy. Nothing has been left out of God to honor His children. To participate in the innermost desire of his heart to call His children home and to share the message of the redemption in Christ, surpass anything imaginable. Only the infinite mercy of God can open up this reality to understand.