

27 April 2020

“Work for food that endures for eternal life”

Jn 6,22-29

When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into those boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus. When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered: In all truth I tell you, you are looking for me not because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat. Do not work for food that goes bad, but work for food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of man will give you, for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal. Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to carry out God's work?' Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is carrying out God's work: you must believe in the one he has sent.'

Jesus recognizes the real motivation why people were looking for him in this situation. They did not really grasp the real and essential dimension of the miracle of bread, but only the additional gift, namely that they were fed.

But the miracle of the multiplication of bread should be for them a sign of the presence of God and remind them of that history which they all certainly knew: God had led his people through the desert and miraculously nourished them. Now this God was in their midst and did the signs that made this memory present. They should seek Jesus, to know him better, to know that he is the ONE!

Sometimes it may be the same for us Christians: that we may not immediately understand what Jesus is trying to tell us, that we may not immediately grasp the phenomena and consider them for what is essential. Certainly, for example, a healing is something wonderful and a powerful intervention of God in a painful situation and we praise him for his goodness. And yet a healing is the outpouring of his everlasting love for us, it testifies to the goodness of God, which manifests itself in this particular case of a healing in this way.

But it should open our eyes that this love **always** surrounds us and is there for us in every situation. When we understand this then we wake up to the whole reality of God and our heart becomes calm and serene in Him.

Jesus knows our motivations, which might not always be clear to us. Therefore, we can ask Him to purify our motivations in relation to Him and in our encounters with people, so that we learn to focus on what is essential and not to be too strongly led by the so-called "coexistences". The latter means that, in addition to our conscious intention, one or more unconscious motivations related to ourselves are also effective.

Jesus points out to us that we should above all strive for that food which remains for Eternal Life! This corresponds to the Word of the Lord: seek first the Kingdom of God, and then all will be given. Our real attention must be directed to recognizing and fulfilling the will of God. This is our contribution that God's will prevails in our lives for our salvation and the salvation of others. If we pay attention to this and carefully strive to follow the path shown to us, then we have recognized the essential and seek to realize it. Nothing comes close to it!

With his word the Lord also gives us a mirror for self-knowledge.

Is our attention too much focused on earthly things? Do we engage in this with all our will while neglecting our religious duties? What is the zeal for the Kingdom of God? Do we take enough time for God?

Then, in the end of the text of today, a wonderful word will show us what the work of God is: it is faith in the Lord!

"This is carrying out God's work: you must believe in the one he has sent."

With this everything is actually said and also those questions are answered, why one is on this earth and what our deeper destination is.

When we follow the Lord earnestly in faith, then the will of God unfolds in our lives and everything else springs from this "work of God". The faith is a supernatural virtue to which we respond. But exactly in this answer we show God our love, in this answer the world is overcome, in this answer we begin to see life in the light of God and to recognize the miracle of his love. With faith, the meaning of our existence opens up: to praise God and to serve him!