

31. March 2022

## Let us not tire of bearing witness

Jn 5:31-47

*Were I to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be true; but there is another witness who speaks on my behalf, and I know that his testimony is true. You sent messengers to John, and he gave his testimony to the truth- not that I depend on human testimony; no, it is for your salvation that I mention it. John was a lamp lit and shining and for a time you were content to enjoy the light that he gave. But my testimony is greater than John's: the deeds my Father has given me to perform, these same deeds of mine testify that the Father has sent me. Besides, the Father who sent me bears witness to me himself. You have never heard his voice, you have never seen his shape, and his word finds no home in you because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent. You pore over the scriptures, believing that in them you can find eternal life; it is these scriptures that testify to me, and yet you refuse to come to me to receive life! Human glory means nothing to me. Besides, I know you too well: you have no love of God in you. I have come in the name of my Father and you refuse to accept me; if someone else should come in his own name you would accept him. How can you believe, since you look to each other for glory and are not concerned with the glory that comes from the one God? Do not imagine that I am going to accuse you before the Father: you have placed your hopes on Moses, and Moses will be the one who accuses you. If you really believed him you would believe me too, since it was about me that he was writing; but if you will not believe what he wrote, how can you believe what I say?*

With these words of Jesus to the Jews, there is no longer any uncertainty. He has done and said everything to make it clear where he came from and who sent him. God Himself has accredited Him, and this is the only testimony necessary for Jesus. Even the precious testimony of John the Baptist would not have sufficed for Him; but the Lord, being the Son of God, appeals to the testimony of the Heavenly Father. The Heavenly Father credits Him by the works which Jesus does at His behest, and by His proclamation, for He is the eternal Word.

We know these truths thanks to the faith and proclamation of the Church, which preserves and transmits the words of Jesus. For the faithful, there is no doubt about the certainty of all this, because the Holy Spirit testifies to us that all that Jesus says is true.

But in the context in which Jesus is speaking in today's Gospel, we find a very different situation. We might say, in human terms, that the Lord, moved by concern for his

hearers, strives to touch their hearts, even though it seemed that his words fell on deaf ears.

Jesus' concern is justified. If those Jews did not believe Him, who is the Lord, the One sent by the Father, of whom Moses had already written, to whom the Scriptures testify and whose presence reflects the Father; then after whom would they go?

"If someone else should come in his own name you would accept him" the Lord tells them. Who could he be referring to? Certainly he speaks of a false Messiah, and in previous meditations I have already expressed my concern that to this day the Jews might follow someone who is not from God or who is even an anti-Christian figure.

But it is not only the Jews who run this risk. In fact, it is a danger for all people who are not deeply attached to God or who have a wrong image of Him.

That is why it is all the more important to bear true witness to the faith. We cannot tire of proclaiming our faith, even if it seems to fall on deaf ears. We can take the Lord himself as an example. Precisely in today's Gospel, we see that Jesus continues to address those Jews, even though he clearly recognises, as he himself says, that the love of God did not dwell in them.

We must never miss an opportunity to tell people where the source of living water is. Without pressure or inner tension, we must do our utmost to prevent them from dying of thirst. We may not be able to awaken thirst in people; but we can point them to the beauty of the source.

Perhaps sometimes we are not so aware of the urgency of evangelisation. But let us look at God's concern for people who may not only be in danger of losing their eternal salvation, but who will only find the deepest meaning of their earthly existence when they encounter God.

The Lord seeks and waits for men! Let us join in His seeking and waiting, with His patience and His perseverance; with His zeal and His unfailing love!