

5. December 2023

The simple hearts

Lk 10:21-24

In that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

The wise and learned of this world are in danger of placing their security in the knowledge of the natural plane, so that they find it difficult to accept the supernatural knowledge of faith, which comes directly from the Holy Spirit. In addition, there is the danger of pride, because knowledge seems to be at one's disposal, whereas the content of faith, which is often quite simple, must simply be accepted with humility. Yes, faith is transmitted to us; it is not something we have acquired ourselves. Everyone knows this!

The first people to whom the Lord's call was addressed were simple fishermen. The spread of the Gospel in the pagan world was also largely through simple or poor people. This was not only because the Gospel was for them a good news of comfort in the midst of their difficult life situations, but because the Gospel above all speaks to the heart of man, and simple hearts find it easier to accept this message.

The Heavenly Father loves simple hearts, as Jesus makes us understand when He tells us to be like children (cf. Mt 18:3). He is certainly alluding to the simplicity and trust of an innocent child.

It is obvious that this attitude is not desirable for those who put their security in their own knowledge. Simplicity, however, is the attitude that easily allows God to fill people with His wisdom.

When we read this passage in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 11:25-28), we hear these beautiful words of Jesus: "*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you*

rest". This invitation is also addressed to simple hearts. It does not refer only to those who suffer greatly under the burdens of their lives and then find the Lord who offers them this consolation. Jesus' invitation is addressed to all people who have realised that they cannot achieve salvation on their own; to those who know that their own strength is limited, not only because they are creatures, but also because they have been affected by original sin; to those who know that human love is insufficient and fragile, and who therefore know that there is nothing in this world on which they can put all their security...

We could say that this word of the Lord helps us to wake up to the reality of our existence. We need a Lord and Saviour; we need someone to guide us; we need someone to love us unconditionally; we need someone to help us carry our burdens. In short, we need Jesus!

And here the Lord shows us that He is the one we need; that He does not take advantage of our need; that He does not reject us because of our weaknesses and sins; that He loves us so much that we can give ourselves to Him again and again...

Simple hearts perceive this and feel at home in the Lord. They live in this security and find rest for their souls.

But how can we become simple souls, how can we free ourselves from the entanglements of our complications?

An important step in this direction is simply to accept the invitation: "Come to me". Let us come to the Lord with all our intentions, and let us not try to find the right answer to everything in ourselves. Let us simply talk to Him about what is troubling us, let us abandon ourselves to Him. And when we receive the help we have asked for, let us thank Him as He deserves. Let us notice day by day how God cares for us. In this way our relationship with the Lord will become closer and more natural, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit our soul will be freed from its tensions and become simpler. Under the gentle light of the Spirit, we will become more and more open, and the more the Spirit of the Lord is able to penetrate us, the more we will know that we are loved by God. And this is the key to simplicity, because the more the soul knows that it is loved by God, the more it will be able to trust and let go... Thus we awaken to the reality of being the child of a most loving Father who offers us His whole heart in the Person of His Son. In Jesus we encounter the infinite goodness of God.