

3. September 2024

## Resistance against evil

Lk 4:31-37

*In those days, Jesus went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because his word carried authority. In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean devil, and he shouted at the top of his voice, 'Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked it, saying, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' And the devil, throwing the man into the middle, went out of him without hurting him at all. Astonishment seized them and they were all saying to one another, 'What is it in his words? He gives orders to unclean spirits with authority and power and they come out.' And the news of him travelled all through the surrounding countryside.*

The Lord came to destroy the works of the devil (cf. 1Jn 3:8); those that seek to rob man of what he has received from God: the life of grace in intimacy with the Lord, a fruitful life as His child and collaborator, and finally eternal life with God and His own.

With the coming of the Lord, the hour of judgement for the demons is manifested. They are forced to back down and cannot maintain their dominion over men. As another gospel passage says, in Jesus has come one who is stronger (cf. Lk 11:22).

We, the faithful, must keep this in mind all the more, because it is up to us too to actualise Christ's victory on earth. The powers of darkness have already been defeated! When the Lord comes, the darkness must give way; that is to say, when He dwells in us, His light also spreads through us and the demons are threatened by it.

We can proceed against the forces of evil with various prayers, and in these times of turmoil in the Church, we should do so with special intensity. The prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, the Holy Rosary and many other spiritual weapons at our disposal should be used by the faithful now more than ever, so that the shadow that currently hangs over the Church may vanish.

To put it even more clearly: The demons must be driven away! This is not the task of priests alone, but all the faithful are called upon to cooperate so that the light of the Lord may spread.

We are not simply at the mercy of these powers, defenceless before them; we are called to offer them resistance in the Lord. In this way, our personal faith is also strengthened.

It is worth remembering again and again that in the spiritual battle *"it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the principalities and the ruling forces"* (Eph 6:12), that is, against the fallen angels, the demons. It is they who incite people to evil and always try to deceive them and involve them in one way or another in their own rebellion against God.

If we look at the state the world is in, we will notice how far away from God people are often under the influence of the powers of darkness, even if they do not realise it.

But from whom will they hear the message of the Lord, if we do not proclaim it to them?

There is no doubt that God can and does intervene directly in people's lives, but the ordinary way He chooses is through the Church. Therefore, the Church must first be purified, so that she can then proclaim the gospel and call people to conversion with new strength and credibility. Conversion means responding to God's call and really ordering one's life before Him. Sadly, we rarely hear about this, although it is urgent that this exhortation resounds from the head of the Church, to reach all its members.

But this does not happen! Nevertheless, the faithful must not allow themselves to be paralysed by this; they must take responsibility, even if they cannot currently count on the guidance of pastors.