

24. September 2024

True unity among men

Lk 8:19-21

His mother and his brothers came looking for him, but they could not get to him because of the crowd. He was told, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to see you.' But he said in answer, 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice.'

With these words, the Lord reveals the supreme dimension of kinship among men; that is, the bond between those who live as true children of God. This new dimension surpasses all the ties that come from blood, for the children of God are oriented toward the same goal: their Heavenly Father. With no one else can we have such a family relationship as with those who earnestly seek God's Will and try to fulfill it day after day.

We can say that this kinship is not born not of the flesh, but of the spirit (cf. Jn 1:12-13). For this reason it knows no boundaries and can arise in any part of the world, wherever men and women fulfill the Divine Will. A particularly beautiful reality arises when blood relatives also become relatives in the Spirit of God.

We should not interpret the first part of today's Gospel as if the Lord were rejecting His Mother and His relatives; rather, it is a lesson He gives us to make us see beyond natural ties. Blood relatives are included in the divine filiation, when they also seek the Will of God. But they should never become an obstacle for us to do what God wants. If this were the case, we would have to put the spiritual kinship before the family of blood.

The history of families, clans, tribes, peoples and nations is often marked by discord and divisions. They are burdened with the inheritance of the "fallen Adam"; or, to put it in biblical terms, the "old Adam" needs to be redeemed by the "new Adam," who is Christ Jesus (cf. 1 Cor 15:21-22).

Unfortunately, this "old Adam" often continues to manifest himself even in those who have already received the grace of divine sonship through baptism. The Apostle James,

for example, laments in his letter: *"Where do these wars and battles between yourselves first start? Is it not precisely in the desires fighting inside your own selves?"* (Jas 4:1).

To bring about this new and deeper familiarity among people is a task that we have not yet completed. The Church, as a community of the faithful, is called to bring about this unity among all peoples.

Only by consciously living "kinship through God" - which presupposes a sincere conversion to Jesus Christ - can the Kingdom of God be made visible on earth. Time and again throughout history there have been ideologies, political systems, etc., that have tried to create a kind of paradisiacal peace in this world; but they have always failed... In reality, this is a clear lesson of history, which should make us understand that, without conversion, true unity among men can never be achieved, no matter how much they may desire it.

As the Lord tells us in today's Gospel, we must listen to the Word of God and fulfill it. Only when this happens can true unity of all humankind emerge. If we can put this into practice, we will live in grace as the children of God and recognize those who also do so.

If we keep in mind that our faith, when put into practice, achieves the union of humanity, then we will be even more motivated to collaborate in the redemption of humanity, far beyond our limits. With every struggle to overcome the "old Adam" and every effort to allow the Lord to work more in us, we are serving the expansion of the Kingdom of God.

Our gaze extends also to all those who are baptized but do not live according to the grace they have received, and to those others who do not yet know God or who know Him very little. All of them are called to live as His children and are to be touched, so that they may be converted and enlightened by God! If we follow the Lord day by day and bear witness to Him, we are serving this end. God will know how to reward us in eternity by granting us full communion with Him, with the angels and with all those who have come home forever.