

11. November 2024

## The good news for humanity

Is 61:1-3

Reading for the memorial of St. Martin of Tours

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to bring good tidings to the afflicted; [a]  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison [b] to those who are bound;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to grant to those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.*

Thanks be to God, we can see with our own eyes how these words of the prophet were fulfilled in the coming of the Messiah, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Whoever meets Him experiences how his eyes are opened and he begins to see. In the life of Jesus all the marvellous gifts of God become present and effective, so that we need not miss any perfection in Him, but can always look to Him and acknowledge again and again: "It is You whom our soul loves, it is You who has loved us forever, it is You who has prepared the way to eternity, so that we may reach the glory of God, where there is no more "crying out and travailing" (Rev 21:4)! How can we ever thank You?

There are so many broken hearts! All people are created from love and for love; how often they do not find this love and their hearts remain empty! All the things of this world, which pretend to fill this emptiness but cannot bring true love, leave the heart unsatisfied and wounded. The soul bleeds and gradually withers. But the Saviour of mankind knows every heart and will spare no effort to heal it with His love. All we have to do is to open the doors and let Him in, to believe and trust in Him.

Then the Holy Spirit will gently touch our heart and heal its wounds, descending into the depths of the soul and letting it know: "Now you have come home. You no longer need

to beg for people's love. I am here. I am love poured into your heart. The Father and the Son have sent me to you and if you will listen to me and follow me, I will wash away the stains of your sin, I will irrigate the dry ground within you, I will heal you from the sickness that afflicts you, I will infuse the warmth of life into the ice that still surrounds your heart, I will free you from stiffness and inner paralysis and lead you on the path of peace. All this I do simply because I love you and want you to live truly”.

And the poor hear the good news proclaimed to them by the King of heaven and earth, who became poor to make them rich by His poverty (2 Cor 8:9), and who Himself becomes their incorruptible treasure, if only they will let Him in. Whoever he is, wherever he lives: Jesus has not forgotten the poor. On the contrary, He turns to them and gives them the true dignity of children of God. All we have to do is open the doors and trust Him, just as the widow of Zarephath trusted the prophet Elijah and everything changed. The poor now possess a treasure that the rich do not know, if they have closed their hearts to it. A poor hut becomes a palace when the true king enters. A palace, on the other hand, becomes a miserable hut if it closes its doors to the true King.

How sin imprisons a man, darkens him and disfigures his being! He loses his beauty and the powers of darkness put him in chains. When he tries to raise his head, the weight of sin oppresses him again and the merciless demons want to prevent him from standing upright. How sad is the state of a person who no longer recognises sin and therefore no longer knows the freedom that the Son of God grants to those who love Him : *"if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed"*, Jesus assures us (Jn 8:36), and He does everything in His power so that man may acquire this freedom.

For this grace to reach others, it also depends on those who already know and follow Jesus. The power of prayer is inexhaustible and many people have found the way to salvation thanks to the prayers of those who pray tirelessly for the conversion of others. Then the moment may come when a person hears the voice of the Lord, his ears are opened and his eyes begin to see:

He realises that the Lord has paid the ransom for him, that He has bought him from the power of darkness and taken away the chains that he himself could never have removed. Then comes the day when the Lord begins to cleanse the soul of its filthiness, to adorn it with His gifts and to clothe it in the wedding garment that the Redeemer has prepared for it. It is the wedding garment for humanity to enter the banquet of the Lamb in time and eternity.

Now the words of the prophet Isaiah come to life: The year of the Lord's favour has been

proclaimed and is still in force for all! But mankind urgently needs to know it, so that they may recognise their Saviour, be converted and live.