

24. March 2022

Let us turn our face to God

Mt 5:17-19

My one command to them was this: Listen to my voice, then I will be your God and you shall be my people. In everything, follow the way that I mark out for you, and you shall prosper. But they did not listen, they did not pay attention; they followed their own devices, their own stubborn and wicked inclinations, and got worse rather than better. From the day your ancestors left Egypt until today, I have sent you all my servants the prophets, persistently sending them day after day. But they have not listened to me, have not paid attention; they have deliberately resisted, behaving worse than their ancestors. So you will tell them all this, but they will not listen to you; you will call them, but they will not answer you. "Then you are to say to them, "This is the nation that will neither listen to the voice of Yahweh its God nor take correction. Sincerity is no more, it has vanished from their mouths.

This short passage from the Old Testament describes very well the drama of our human existence. Man has been told what is good and what is evil; he needs to be instructed, guided and educated by God to walk in the right way; but often he avoids this education, does not incline his ear and goes his own way.

As human beings, we face the problem of being inclined to evil, because of our fallen nature; and our desires and ideas are subject to deception and often do not correspond to the Will of God.

In yesterday's meditation we had seen that the Lord did not come to abolish one jot or tittle of the Law (Mt 5:17-19), and that we must not only keep God's commandments ourselves, but also become a blessing to others by teaching them to observe them.

But what can be done when men do not want to listen? Jeremiah, speaking for God, says to the people of Israel: *"This is the nation that will neither listen to the voice of Yahweh its God nor take correction"*. And we know what the consequences are!

When we look at the deviations in society and politics, we will inevitably come to the same conclusion concerning our generation. The whole deadly danger to souls, which today comes mainly from the democracies of the West, is related to the fact that God's voice is not being heard, that His commandments are no longer the absolute criterion and measure for all people.

So what is to be done?

Call evil by its name! Some time ago, Cardinal Robert Sarah expressed the following in an interview: *"The West is not only about to lose its soul, it is also about to commit suicide. For a tree that no longer has roots is doomed to die. I believe that the West cannot give up the roots that created its culture, its values. (...) Chilling things are happening in the West. I believe that a Parliament that authorises the death of an innocent and defenceless child commits grave violence against the human person. When abortion is imposed, especially in developing countries, by telling them that if they do not accept it, they will no longer receive aid, it is violence. It is not unusual for this to happen. Since we have abandoned God, we have abandoned man. We no longer have a clear vision of man. In the West, there is currently a serious anthropological crisis at work, which leads to people being treated as objects"*.

And with regard to the problem in the Church, Cardinal Sarah made this statement: *"I believe that there is a great crisis of faith, a great crisis in our personal relationship with God"*.

It must be repeated again and again - and this is an important task of the Church - that the growing crisis in the world is related to the decline of faith, the apostasy. Also uncomfortable truths must be told, just as a doctor should not normally withhold a diagnosis because it is painful.

At the same time, every effort must be made to evangelise and thus participate in God's saving work. Also these daily meditations on the Word of God are to serve the work of the Lord, and I would invite those who listen to them to also share them with those who might be helped by them.

But all our efforts must be sustained by prayer, by the inner journey of following Christ and by work in our own hearts. We who follow the Lord should be the first to listen to God and always incline our ear to him; the first in whom God can dwell; the first to turn our faces to him and not our backs; the first to intercede for others, as is done, for example, in the Fatima prayer: *"O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of Thy mercy."*