

Rectoría San Juan de Dios
XXII Sunday of Ordinary Time-Cycle A
Jer 20, 7-9; Ps 63; Rm 12, 1-2; Mt 16, 21-27
Fr Dante Gabriel Jiménez Muñoz Ledo

Let Us Be On the Road

Jesus makes the firm decision to go to Jerusalem. Those who follow Him understand that this is a radical course. The religious and political institutions in Jerusalem make it the place where definitive judgments are given out; it is the place where all the powers are concentrated.

Jesus starts out on the road during a time of instability; many people don't know to whom they should turn or where to go; they are hoping anxiously for a savior, but a local, political and religious savior, a Davidic messiah. This is the thinking of Peter; he wants a powerful messiah who doesn't have to suffer or die. Jesus is the other type of messiah; He is the one who will give life by giving up His own life.

When Jesus starts out on the road, it is also a period of paralysis and fear in which no one knows what to do or where to go. It is much like this stage of humanity in which we are living, beyond postmodernity. It is like a change of epoch, of culture, what Pope Benedict XVI has called a "crossroads"¹ to explain that we could find ourselves bewildered, in doubt and uncertainty, without direction.

How can the grave problems of security, poverty, and violence be resolved? How can a sense of meaning be

¹ Pope Benedict XVI, *Documento de Aparecida*, inaugural discourse

restored to life? Where is the hope capable of passing on vitality and hope to our story?

Jesus will persist in looking toward God, and in taking the road to giving up His life. That has been the way to leave the crossroads ever since.

The Word of God orients us with these three coordinates as we make our way on the road:

1-Let us allow ourselves to be seduced.

Like the prophet, we have to allow ourselves to be seduced by the plan of God, even though our personal project may not be successful. The important thing is not that the evils that the prophet announced to the people happen so that the prophet of God does not look bad, but that the mercy of God is perceived in His pardon.

What is important in our life is not just to succeed, but to respond to a fire burning deep in our bones that seeks justice according to God.

When we are seduced by God, we may appear strange to others; we may not be understood, but that is not as important as making the right decisions along the way.

2- Let us know how to worship.

It is in our offering, in our giving to others, where we truly worship God, where there are no precise rules for worship. It is there that each person can grow in the perfection of his love.

But to worship this way requires abandoning the mentality of the world, adopting the scale of values of the Cross, and doing what God wants—doing what is good and what is perfect, doing whatever pleases God:

The good: when I seek to contribute to the good in all that I do.

The perfect: what does not only remain as a good intention, but that in which I persevere until it is fulfilled, because it is then that I can contemplate the goodness of God.

What is pleasing to God: when I respond to the needs of another person, that pleases God.

3-Let us take up the Cross.

We take up our own cross as an experience of love. When the outward realities of the world confuse us, as they did with Peter in today's reading of the Gospel, we could stumble along the way. There is no reality, however splendid, that can compare with the gift of a person, with the gift of a particular person. That particular person is Jesus, and after Him, each person given to me as one of my loved ones is there before me to testify that the best way is that of full self-donation.

The Cross then opens up solidarity and speaks of suffering as a sacrificial value.

If I want my life to make sense, if I want to make sense of this stage of humanity, I want to be on the road, like Jesus, until the completion of the whole of my self-donation.