

## GOSPEL

*Matthew 11:25-30*

Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

## A REFLECTION BY POPE FRANCIS

*5 July 2020*

This Sunday's Gospel reading (cf. Mt 11:25-30) is divided into three parts: first of all, Jesus raises a prayer of blessing and thanksgiving to the Father because he revealed the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven to the poor and to the simple; then he reveals the intimate and unique relationship between himself and the Father; and finally he invites us to go to him and to follow him to find solace.

In the first place, Jesus praises the Father because he has kept the secrets of his Kingdom, of his truth, hidden "from the wise and understanding" (v. 25). He calls them so with a veil of irony because they presume to be wise, understanding, and therefore, very often, have a closed heart. True wisdom also comes from the heart. It is not only a matter of understanding ideas: true wisdom also enters the heart. And if you know many things but have a closed heart, you are not wise. Jesus tells them that his Father's mysteries are revealed to the "little ones", to those who confidently open themselves to his Word of salvation, who open their heart to the Word of salvation, who feel the need for him and await everything from him. The heart that is open and trustful towards the Lord.

Then, Jesus explains that he has received everything from the Father, and calls him "my Father", to affirm the unique nature of his relationship with him.

Indeed, only between the Son and the Father is there total reciprocity: each one knows the other, each one lives in the other. But this unique communion is like a flower that blossoms to freely reveal its beauty and its goodness. And here then is Jesus' invitation: "Come to me..." (v. 28). He wishes to give what he receives from the Father. He wants to give us Truth, and Jesus' Truth is always free: it is a gift, it is the Holy Spirit, the Truth.

Just as the Father has a preference for the "little ones", Jesus also addresses those "who labour and are heavy laden". Indeed, he places himself among them, because he is "gentle and lowly in heart" (v. 29): this is how he describes himself. It is the same in the first and third Beatitudes, that of the humble and poor in spirit, and that of the meek (cf. Mt 5:35): the meekness of Jesus. In this way Jesus, "meek and humble", is not a model for the resigned, nor is he simply a victim, but rather he is the Man who lives this condition "from the heart" in full transparency to the love of the Father, that is, to the Holy Spirit. He is the model of the "poor in spirit" and of all the other "blesseds" of the Gospel, who carry out God's will and bear witness to his Kingdom.

And then, Jesus says that if we go to him, we will find rest. The "rest" that Christ offers to the weary and oppressed is not merely psychological solace or donated charity, but the joy of the poor who are evangelized and are builders of the new humanity: this is solace. Joy. The joy that Jesus gives us is unique. It is the joy that he himself has. It is a message for all of us, for all people of good will, which Jesus still conveys today in the world that exalts those who become rich and powerful... But how often do we say, "Ah, I would like to be like him, or like her, who is rich, has a lot of power, lacks nothing..." The world exalts those who are rich and powerful, no matter by what means, and at times tramples upon the human being and his or her dignity. And we see this every day, the poor trampled underfoot... And it is a message for the Church, called to live works of mercy and to evangelize the poor, to be meek and humble. This is how the Lord wants his Church, that is, us, to be.

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May, the humblest and highest of creatures, implore from God wisdom of heart for us, so that we may discern his signs in our lives and be participants in those mysteries which, hidden from the proud, are revealed to the humble.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/ Homily?



**Head:** How is understanding different from wisdom?



**Heart:** What does it mean to you that “True wisdom comes also comes from the heart”?



**Hands:** If we are called to “live works of mercy and to evangelise the poor, to be meek and humble”, how might we do that this week in our own lives?

## PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. “Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray”)
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others’ prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the ‘Glory Be’.