



### **Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Mark 3: 7-12.**

*Jesus withdrew toward the sea with his disciples. A large number of people followed from Galilee and from Judea. Hearing what he was doing, a large number of people came to him also from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond the Jordan, and from the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon. He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him. He had cured many and, as a result, those who had diseases were pressing upon him to touch him. And whenever unclean spirits saw him they would fall down before him and shout, "You are the Son of God." He warned them sternly not to make him known.*

### **Mark 3:7-12**

#### **Introductory Prayer:**

Lord, this time of prayer should be everything for me: the moment that I long for, the food that sustains me, the comfort that strengthens me. I know that you are at work in me even when I don't feel you and don't even seem able to perceive your presence. I want to pray fervently and from the heart, not just with my mind.

#### **Petition:**

Lord, help me to touch you in this moment of prayer. Help me to touch you in the Eucharist so that your presence will transform me.

#### **1. Was Jesus Afraid?**

In yesterday's Gospel text, Jesus silenced the Pharisees in the synagogue. So incensed were they against the Lord that they began to plot with the Herodians to kill him. Now Jesus has retreated from the synagogues to the lakeshore and the open fields. Was Christ afraid? Was he running from his enemies? Hardly. The Lord was simply aware that his hour had not yet come. When it does approach, he will embrace it by marching resolutely to Jerusalem and his passion and death. The ones who really are afraid are the demons. They recognize that God is manifesting his power through Christ, and they tremble before him. The Son of God has come to win back what Satan's lies have stolen. Does Christ's power accompanying me in my life give me the courage I need to confront

any situation as his witness?

## **2. To Touch the Lord:**

In this vivid Gospel scene, the crowds of stricken humanity clamor around Jesus. Jews and gentiles journey from the far away regions of Idumea to the south, and Tyre and Sidon to the north, to catch a glimpse of the Master, to hear him speak words that no one has ever spoken before to touch him and be healed of their infirmities. Oh, that we too had lived during the time of Christ in order to touch him and be cured of our sadness and selfishness, our heartache and egotism, our loneliness and lies, and even our physical ailments! Did Christ love those people who surrounded him by the lakeshore more than he loves us? No. He enables us to touch him more easily than they every time we receive him in the Eucharist. Then why are we not yet healed? The disciples once cried out to Jesus, "Increase our faith!" And he replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed...."

## **3. The Person of Christ:**

Irresistible. How can we grow in our faith in Christ? How can we, too, experience the irresistible attraction of his person like the crowds in Mark's Gospel did? Nothing fills our life as much as contemplating the figure of Christ and perceiving the irresistible power of attraction he exercises through the centuries. Draw close to him, and in the depths of your souls contemplate him in all of the beauty of his human and divine stature. Along with the Eucharist, it is through prayer that we can come to touch Christ. Prayer is the most solemn moment for confessing our love; it is the *raison* of our life, the ideal of our apostolate, the nourishment of our whole existence.

## **Conversation with Christ:**

Thank you, Lord, for letting me catch a glimpse of who you are through this meditation. Help me to respond to the attraction of your person with my whole life and to hold nothing back from you.

## **Resolution:**

I will visit Christ in the Eucharist or make a spiritual communion to thank him for his love and to contemplate him in the beauty of his divine and human stature.