



1) Opening prayer

Father,
you show your almighty power
in your mercy and forgiveness.
Continue to fill us with your gifts of love.
Help us to hurry towards the eternal life your promise
and come to share in the joys of your kingdom.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

2) Gospel Reading - Luke 10,17-24

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. 'Lord,' they said, 'even the devils submit to us when we use your name.'

He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Look, I have given you power to tread down serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice instead that your names are written in heaven.'

Just at this time, filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, he said, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, for that is what it has pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.'

Then turning to his disciples he spoke to them by themselves, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.'

3) Reflection

- Context. Previously Jesus had sent 72 disciples, now they return from their mission and they give an account of it. One can prove that the success of the mission is due to the experience of the superiority or better the supremacy of the name of Jesus in regard

to the power of evil. The defeat of Satan coincides with the coming of the Kingdom: the disciples have seen it in their present mission. The diabolical forces have been weakened: the demons have submitted to the power of the name of Jesus. Such a conviction cannot be the foundation of their joy and the enthusiasm of their missionary witness; joy has its last root or origin in the fact of being known and loved by God. This does not mean that being protected by God and the relationship with him always places us in an advantageous situation in the face of the diabolical forces. Here is inserted the mediation of Jesus between God and us: "Look, I have given you power" (v. 19). The power of Jesus is one that makes us experience the success in regard to the devil's power and he protects us. A power that can be transmitted only when Satan is defeated, Jesus has been present in the fall of Satan, even if he is not as yet definitively defeated or overcome; Christians are called to hinder, to put an obstacle to the power of Satan on earth. They are sure of the victory in spite of the fact that they live in a critical situation: they participate to obtain victory in the communion of love with Christ even though they may be tried by suffering and death. Just the same, the reason for joy is not in the certainty of coming out unharmed but of being loved by God. The expression of Jesus, "your names are written in heaven" is a witness that being present to the heart of God (memory) guarantees the continuity of our life in eternity. The success of the mission of the disciples is the consequence of the defeat of Satan, now is shown the benevolence of the Father (vv. 21-22): the success of the word of Grace in the mission of the seventy two, seen as the design of the Father and in the communion in the resurrection of the Son, is, beginning now, the revelation of the benevolence of the Father; the mission becomes a space for the revelation of God's will in human time. Such experience is transmitted by Luke in a context of prayer: it shows on one side the reaction in heaven ("I bless you Father", (v. 21) and that on earth (vv. 23-24).

- The prayer of rejoicing or exultation. In the prayer that Jesus addresses to the Father, guided by the action of the Spirit, it is said that "exults", expresses the openness of the Messianic joy and proclaims the goodness of the Father. This is made evident in the little ones, in the poor and in those who have no value because they have accepted the Word transmitted by those sent and thus they have access to the relationship between the Divine Persons of the Trinity. Instead, the wise and the learned, on account that they feel sure, are gratified because of their intellectual and theological competence. But such an attitude prevents them from entering in the dynamism of salvation, given by Jesus. The teaching that Luke intends to transmit to individual believers, not less to the ecclesial communities, may be synthesized as follows: Humility opens to faith; the sufficiency of one's assurance closes to pardon, to light, to God's goodness. The prayer of Jesus has its effects on all those who accept to allow themselves to be wrapped up by the goodness of the Father.

4) Personal questions

- The mission to take the life of God to others implies a life style that is poor and humble. Is your life permeated by the life of God, by the Word of grace that comes from Jesus?
- Do you have trust in God's call and in his power that asks to be manifested through

simplicity, poverty and humility?

5) Concluding Prayer

Lord, you are kind and forgiving,
rich in faithful love for all who call upon you.
Yahweh, hear my prayer,
listen to the sound of my pleading. (Ps 86,5-6)