



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 10: 17-24.

The seventy-two disciples returned rejoicing and said to Jesus, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name." Jesus said, "I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power 'to tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." At that very moment he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him." Turning to the disciples in private he said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."

Luke 10: 13-16.

Introductory Prayer:

Lord, I believe that you are with me as I begin this prayer. I trust in your kindness and love. You know my weaknesses because you saw them all during the agony you underwent for me on Good Friday. I wish to stay as close to you in this prayer as your Mother did to you at the foot of the cross. Accept this as the expression of my love for you.

Petition:

Lord, help me to appreciate your gifts and use them to the best of my ability, for your glory.

1. The Privileged Few:

Today we see another side of Jesus in the Gospel. Often we see him as the miracle worker, curing the sick, raising the dead. But now we see the flipside of these miracles:

Christ demands a response from the people who have witnessed them. It's not enough that people stare in wonderment at Our Lord's mighty deeds. Those deeds, among other things, prove his divine origin and the truthfulness of his message. Part of that message demands repentance and conversion. Closer to our own day we can think of the tens of millions of people who personally saw Pope John Paul II in his many public appearances. How many of those people actually changed their lives after the encounter? How have I responded to God's grace and favor in my life? Have I taken God's graces for granted?

2. The Not-so-Blessed:

God, in his mysterious design seems, to favor some souls with gifts not given to others. Here, Jesus acknowledges that Tyre and Sidon pagan towns would have responded better to his miracles than did Chorazin and Capernaum. That begs the question: Why didn't Jesus perform more miracles in those Gentile towns? Alas, ours is not the place to question the wisdom of God. Suffice it to say that Christ gives some of us more than he gives others, and he expects to see a return on his investment. It's not enough that we keep our faith untarnished and sitting on a shelf, hidden from the world. No. The gift of faith should prompt us to strive for holiness, for continual conversion of heart, and for zeal to build the Church. Does faith impact my life like that?

3. Domino Effect:

Christ's authority includes his ability to delegate it. To the Church, he gives the power to bind and to loose. "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (John 20:23). Moreover, Number 891 of the Catechism observes that "The Roman Pontiff, head of the college of bishops, enjoys infallibility in virtue of his office, when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful -- who confirms his brethren in the faith -- he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals." When we follow the Holy Father's teaching, we honor the One who gave him authority. And Our Lord's authority extends in other areas: to parents over their dependent children, to government officials who oversee the common good, etc. Do I respect the legitimate authority of those around me? Do I understand that obedience to legitimate authority is a form of obedience to God himself?

Conversation with Christ:

Jesus, help me see that your obedience to Pilate on Good Friday was part of your obedience to your loving Father in heaven. Let me understand that obedience to legitimate authority is a means of growth in humility and holiness.

Resolution:

I will carry out one request that a legitimate authority (a boss, a parent, etc.) has been asking of me and do it with joy.

