

Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...

Friday, 25 October 2019

Mt 16:5-12

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“Look out, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Mt 16:6). Obviously, the disciples had difficulty to understand the above saying of Jesus, since they were preoccupied with the visible, that is, leaven and bread. But Jesus used the term ‘leaven’ as a metaphor.

Here leaven stands for thought or doctrine and not the leaven for bread. The thought of Pharisees and Sadducees was known for their distortion of the divine design. Jesus asked his disciples to be mindful of the hidden dangerous perspectives of Pharisees and Sadducees of his time, especially their hypocrisy.

The pattern of pharisaic thought is prevalent in our circles as well. Often the electronic and social media are biased and they represent their master’s voice; they fail to communicate facts as they are. Moreover, they cover up the truth by repeatedly telling lies. Unfortunately, there are people to buy them.

Be watchful of the leaven of the mass-media today. Thoughts play as leaven of the society. Whoever has money and muscle power, take advantage of the magic of the media, though they are fabricated stories far from the truth. Beware of false or fake information. They are plenty out there. The need to discern is all the more urgent and important. Children play virtual games indiscriminately and end up in tragedy.

Be the leaven of the world. Indeed, leaven is essential to make dough rise in order to bake bread. It is a magic. The thought works as leaven in the society, for better or for verse. As the thought, so the act. We are, what our thoughts are. As leaven makes dough to rise, we are invited to be the leaven of the world, capable of directing its course of direction. Good thoughts bear good fruits.

Be the leaven of the mission of Christ. As we are celebrating the extraordinary month of mission, we should be watchful of the false thoughts on the evangelizing mission of the Church. Unfortunately, confusing and conflicting thoughts are being orchestrated today and ordinary faithful and even the missionaries are in dilemma regarding the mission of the Church. Church is missionary by nature; Church exists to evangelize. To be a Christian is to evangelize.

Pope Francis asks us to be watchful of the leaven of the contemporary Pharisees and Sadducees, who distort and discourage the enthusiasm of the missionary disciples of Christ. They are within the walls and outside. In the *Joy of the Gospel*, Pope appeals the faithful passionately:

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary enthusiasm!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the joy of sharing the Good News!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of community!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the Gospel!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the ideal of fraternal love!

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigour

It is high time for us to discover the joy and beauty of the mystery of our faith and to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ and to spread the leaven of Christ freely, faithfully, and fearlessly.

Jesus uses the metaphor of leaven to reveal the Kingdom of God. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened" (Mt 13:33). At this instance, leaven means the light, life, and love of Christ, transforming the whole world from within to the glory of God, in which consists the full flourishing of human beings in the world.

Being imbibed by the Eucharistic leaven, let us encounter Christ - the bread of life - and to engender joy in us so as to celebrate our Christian life and to transform the world by sharing the life-giving spirit of Christ with others, the essence of going forth as missionary disciples to the whole creation. Let us pray:

Jesus, my Lord!

My leaven, my mission,

Have mercy on me!

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