

Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...

Saturday, 19 October 2019

XXVIII Week of the Ordinary Time

Lk 12:8-12

Fr. Joshy Nelluvelil CMI, Rome

The exhortation of Jesus in today's gospel reading refers to two things about Holy Spirit: the sin against the Holy Spirit and the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The sin against the Holy Spirit is the obstinate refusal to open our eyes to the mercy of God. It is the deliberate rejection of God's mercy and salvation; it is a wilful choice of evil against good. The sinner rejects God's mercy and therefore the sinner himself makes God incapable of forgiveness.

In the gospel of St. Matthew, this exhortation of Jesus is in the context of a false accusation from the Pharisees: that Jesus casts out demons with the help of "the ruler of demons, Beelzebul." This is a grave offence against the Holy Spirit: to call good as evil; that too deliberately, out of vested interests.

We can plug our ears and close our eyes to the evidence of good around us; we can dramatically and stubbornly close our hearts from accepting the Word of God; we can turn our gaze to the other side and reject the presence of God (Thanks to God, who gave us freedom and respects our freedom). Nevertheless, God works and acts discreetly in our lives, for sure. But sometimes His works are conspicuous. Even then we can ignore "the evidence" and not accept his proposal of love. Thus our hearts shut themselves to the action of the Holy Spirit. The result is that we are no longer able to discover our true identity, no longer able to discover the great project that God has for us. God does what he can and never forces our freedom. We can choose not to know him, not to meet him, not to be with him... Let us watch over ourselves!

The joyful and hopeful revelation of Jesus in the passage is that the Holy Spirit will speak for those who acknowledge Him (Jesus) before others. This promise of Jesus encourages and empowers all the missionaries. These words of Jesus shall be memorized and repeated in this month that is specially dedicated for mission. And let us not be afraid, as disciples of Jesus; we are called to bear witness to Him in a world that is ever more intolerant to the Church!

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