

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Apr 17th 2024

Where am I headed? Do I go to Jesus?

The crowd who followed Jesus had experienced the sign of Jesus feeding the multitude in the desert. They hailed him as a prophet; wanted him to be their king. However, they refused to adhere to his words. They preferred to remain a crowd rather than to believe in Him and become His disciples. This was an actual problem the evangelist faced in his community when writing the Gospel. He attempts to address the unbelief of numerous people in the resurrection of Jesus. The Gospel also deals with the obvious fruits of the Spirit of Jesus at work within the Christian community.

John tells his community, ' If people refuse to come to Jesus and entrust themselves to him, they fail to be open to the inspirations of the Father who sent Jesus. Only those open to the Father's inspiration can receive the grace to come to Jesus and believe in him.

Those who followed the "WAY" of Jesus in the early community were no more accepted in the synagogues by the Jews. They were driven away. John wants to reassure those 'outcasts' of society: "Anyone who comes to me I will never drive away" (Jn 6:37). That is the invitation to come to Jesus, the living one, to gain immunity against death.

In his reflections on the passage, Pope Francis writes: "To come to Jesus: this might seem a generic and even a cliched spiritual exhortation. But let us try to make it concrete by asking a few questions: Today, in the files that I handled in the office, did I draw nearer to the Lord? Did I make them an occasion for speaking to him? In the persons whom I met, did I involve Jesus?

Did I bring them to him in prayer? Or did I do everything while thinking only of my concerns, rejoicing only in things that went well for me and complaining about those that didn't? To keep it in one word, did I live my day coming to the Lord, or was I simply orbiting around myself? And where am I headed? Do I seek only to make a good impression and protect my ego, schedule and free time? Or do I come to the Lord?

Let us allow ourselves to be challenged by these thoughts. We will be more attuned to the desire that Jesus expresses in today's Gospel: that he loses nothing of what the Father has given him (cf. Jn 6:39). Amid so many worldly voices that make us forget the meaning of life, let us grow attuned to the will of Jesus, risen and alive. Thus we will make our lives this day a dawn of resurrection.