

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Apr 24th 2024

Today we come to the end of what is called the “Book of Signs” (chaps 1-12) of John’s gospel. Through these signs – seven of them – Jesus clearly indicated who he is and what his mission is.

Today’s passage is a summary of all that has been said in the previous chapters. The text says that Jesus “cried out” - giving extra emphasis to what he is proclaiming. They would be words addressed to no one in particular and reflecting no particular context. Effectively, they summed up the essence of Jesus’ teaching. Their intended audience was the members of the community of believers of the author of the Gospel.

Very often, the narrative had spoken of the mission of Jesus as to reveal - the Father to the world. Jesus was the Word of God, the revelation of the mysterious God, in human form – he is the only reliable way by which God could be truly known. To believe in Jesus was to believe in the Father. It implies that there is also a personal commitment to Jesus and to his mission.

As the revelation of the mystery of God, Jesus enabled people to see in him, the divine love of God. He was the light, both illuminating the mystery of God and at the same time destroying the competitive and violent selfishness of the world, which John the evangelist described as the dark: the destructive energies of those who love themselves more than anything else.

As he has said before, Jesus is a light taking away the darkness with which we are surrounded. He has come to bring salvation, to bring wholeness to the world, and not to condemn it. Yet, the ‘word’ of Jesus is a challenge. It offers us a way of living and relating with God, with others, and with ourselves. If we choose another way we have only ourselves to blame when our lives go downhill. But Jesus is always there to lift us up. Indeed, salvation is a two-way process. God offers it to us but does not force it on us.

The God who created you without your consent but cannot save you without your consent. Therefore, once again the imperative is to listen to the Word and live by his Word.