



27. September 2019

„The Necessity of Faith“

**Lk 9:18-22**

***Now it happened that he was praying alone, and his disciples came to him and he put this question to them, 'Who do the crowds say I am?' And they answered, 'Some say John the Baptist; others Elijah; others again one of the ancient prophets come back to life.' 'But you,' he said to them, 'who do you say I am?' It was Peter who spoke up. 'The Christ of God,' he said. But he gave them strict orders and charged them not to say this to anyone. He said, 'The Son of man is destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and to be put to death, and to be raised up on the third day.'***

What a tragedy speaks from these words, even if we hear the texts again and again and are familiar with them. The Lord must instruct His disciples to conceal their knowledge of the Messiah, yet His coming is the redemptive message for all mankind and a cause for everlasting joy.

What a distortion of reality!

We humans may have become accustomed to much perversion in this world and no longer realize so many perverted areas of life properly. But if we look at it with the light of faith, we will see the deep darkness that lies over the world! The knowledge of the Messiah, on the other hand, brings light into this darkness. God has mercy on men.

It is this mercy of God that gives us true hope in the arrival of the Son of God, it raises our gaze to God with confidence and removes even the senselessness of death.

But with the knowledge of the Messiah and the way He has gone to our salvation, people are struggling. Even in the days of Jesus, when one knew his sermon, his signs, his testimony, many did not come to the insight of the confession that is proclaimed to us in today's gospel by Peter.

Why is this so?

It is a question that we cannot answer comprehensively, for we experience the grace of faith in Christ as an undeserved gift, whether we have already received it from childhood on or experienced a conversion in our life. Therefore, we cannot say for sure why one receives the faith, the other does not.

But this does not mean that God has called certain people to believe and others - as the so-called predestination doctrine taught - not. Nor does it mean that it does not matter whether man believes or not, whether he follows the true religion or another. God revealed the true faith in His Son Jesus Christ and entrusted the gospel to His Church. He has previously spoken through the prophets. The mission of the Church is to proclaim true faith.

When the proclamation of the authentic faith reaches man and thus he gets to know the truth, he is led into a decision. Does he open himself to this truth, to the light of the Holy Spirit, or does he close himself to it?

A culpable closure always entails great consequences, for man is created to know and live with God and to follow the truth. If he closes himself to the message of faith, then the plan of God is not realized with him, and the grace of salvation does not reach him. Man cannot then subsequently take the place that God has provided for him in his salvation. If he lives in sin and does not repent, his eternal salvation is in danger.

So our question is what we can do to make faith reach people, that they too will have the lightful answer St. Peter gave.

We know the answer as faithful Catholics: the fervent prayer, to offer our sacrifices to the Lord, to walk the path of holiness, to practice the works of mercy, and to use all the possibilities offered to us, to spread the gospel.

We know that the Lord wants to reach all people and to call and save them through Jesus. We are called to participate in searching for them. This is a work of real love.