

The biblical readings on this Sunday invite us to listen to the Lord's voice. Many people think that the voice of Lord is far away and inaccessible. When they pray it seems to them that they are talking to a person who does not care; if God does not seem to respond, how do we know what He expects from us?

We get the answer in the first reading. Moses helps us understand that God's word is very near; it is in our daily encounters, in our projects, in our very hearts. God's word is there in the heart of our lives. But most of the time, we hesitate to put it into practice. We say to ourselves that it is not worthwhile to listen to those calls to which we do not want to respond.

However, we who read the Bible, God's word, have to listen and put it into practice in our daily lives. This is not optional. Through God's word, it is God Himself who dwells in the believer. For the believer that word is not a burden but a joy. It is not there to crush us but to lift us up. When it has entered our lives, it is like sap in a tree or a stream in the flat land. It bears great fruit. God is a voice that joins us in the deepest places of our hearts. Then, we can make these words ours "Today, do not close our hearts but listen to the voice of Lord".

In the second reading, Saint Paul invites us to go one step further in welcoming this word. At his time, many people thought that mysterious powers served as an intermediary between God and humanity. In his letter, Saint Paul reacts strongly; he proclaims the unique and central place of the Lord Jesus who is the image of the invisible God. It is through him and by him that God created all. Then, like Peter, we can respond to him, "To whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life."

In the Gospel, Jesus does not give a prepared response. He appeals to our sense of responsibility. It is up to each of us to find a good response to the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Through his response, Jesus already shows us the way. His way is true. But we are easily tempted to impose our own points of view. Jesus shows us that true dialogue has to respect others and help them to find their own responses.

And when He is asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus replies by telling the story of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. As he travels he goes through a desert area. At that time, robbers hid from travelers to ambush them and steal from them. This traveler ended up a victim of such aggression. In addition to his physical and moral misfortune, was added religious exclusion. Having been touched by the impure people, he himself became impure.

Two men, a priest and a doctor of the law, saw that miserable man. Both of them know the commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...and your neighbor as yourself." But, they also know that he is impure. A simple touch would make them unfit to celebrate in worship. We, too, sometimes behave like this. It is easier to quote the law and rules of society than to help the victim of a crime.

Which of these three was neighbor to the robbers' victim? Remember, it is not just about the neighbor that I should rescue but it's about the one who rescued me. Before we love, we should recognize that we are loved. We resemble that man who fell and needed to be rescued. Since our birth, we have been given the love of our parents and neighborhood. At the beginning of that chain, we find God Himself. He is the Good Samaritan who manifested himself through his son Jesus. He made himself the neighbor of all of humanity.

This is important for us: Our neighbor is anybody that approaches others with welcoming, even if they are strangers. We should not choose between people, those we love and those we don't. We all have to be brothers. The love of neighbor is the reconciliation with those whom God loves. He loves each of us - even those whom we exclude.

By coming to the Eucharist, we come to you Lord to tell you we love you. Help us to welcome the love which is in you. Then we could love like you do. You who do not cease to take care of us. Bless us and help us to resemble you. Amen!!!