

On Humility and Confidence - Commentary to the Gospel of the 11th Sunday

On HUMILITY AND CONFIDENCE

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Jesus often worried about the fact that his followers might one day feel discouraged when seeing that their efforts to make this world more humane and happy did not seem to have much success. Would they forget about the Kingdom of God? Would they still trust his Father? What really mattered was that they kept trying.

Using references and images from the life of farmers in Galilee, Jesus encouraged his disciples always to be realistic and work patiently and with great confidence. Finding the right ways to the Kingdom of God would never be easy. They were to keep learning from how the regular farmers worked.

First of all, they should compare their work to the way farmers sow their seeds, and not just wait for the harvest. They should not live just depending on the results. They should never be too worried about the immediate results of the present crop. Their attention should be focussed on preaching well the Gospel. Jesus' followers must be like farmers that sow the seeds of the Gospel and nothing else.

After so many centuries of religious expansion and great social power, Christians must regain for the Church the humble traits of a farmer. They should forget the logic of the farmer who keeps waiting for a rich crop and have the patience of one who keeps working patiently for a brighter future.

The beginning of any farming project must be humble. All the more, when the seed we are trying to plant is God's project for the human race. The real strength of the Gospel does not consist in something spectacular or very attractive. In the words of Jesus, the Gospel message is like sowing a mustard seed that is planted quietly in people's hearts.

Hence the Gospel can only be planted and sowed with faith. That is what Jesus wants his disciples to learn from his parables. God's project of making a better and more humane world implies a saving and transforming power that the sower-farmer does not possess. When the Good News of God is understood by an individual or group of persons, then something starts to grow that is well beyond our own merits.

At present, within the Church, we really do not know how to proceed

in the midst of such new and unfamiliar situations: we live in a society that has grown ever more indifferent or hostile to religious beliefs and moral codes. No one seems to know how to deal with it or what to do. The only option might be to try finding new ways with the humility and confidence that Jesus showed us.

Sooner or later, Christians will feel the need to return to the essentials. We shall, then, discover that only Jesus' strength and original message can regenerate that faith that our society today has lost. And only then we shall be able to start, in all humility, sowing the seed of our Gospel and wait for our Faith to be renewed. It will have to grow from our own humble beginnings and not from our pastoral efforts.

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