

## Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Aug 4th 2016

1) “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah”. 2) “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me”. How opposite are these two statements! How strong and direct are these two expressions! Both are said by Jesus and both are said to Peter. Within a short period of time Jesus blesses Peter and later on the Master scolds the disciple. In the very same person of Simon Peter, two different dynamisms are met, two perspectives of existence, two attitudes for confronting life, two ways for understanding how the human being acts and lives. Today’s Gospel gives us a brilliant lesson about what the specialists call spiritual psychology, because these two dynamisms are present in all of us. We can find these two spiritual and existential movements in our daily life and in our continuous process of growing in faith. Peter is, in today Gospel, an eloquent example for any person who wants to live according to his faith.

The first dynamism is the most genuine and fundamental. It is the dynamism generated by a deep relationship with God. As Jesus said to Peter: “For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly father”. The first movement that is present in our life is the divine one, the existential openness to God’s will, a spiritual disposition to mould our life according to God’s word. We are blessed, as Peter was, when we open our heart to God and we give him the opportunity to shape our behaviour and our thoughts, as the potter moulds the clay vessel. If the first dynamism comes from the heavenly Father, the second one comes from our own weak nature. The second existential movement that configures our lives is the complex world of impulses and natural inclinations. As Jesus said to Peter, “You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do”. The second dynamism is the deep desire to control everything only with our own strength, sending God far away from us. While the first dynamism is the fruit of a healthy relationship with God, the second one is the fruit of the proud and egocentric tendency that enthrones the human being as lord and owner of the world.

Let us take the chance given by today’s Gospel to remember that only God, our heavenly Father, is the Lord of our life and without him we cannot do anything. If the branches are separated from the vine, they cannot bear fruit and, at the end of the day, they die. Let us tune our daily life following the rhythm of the Word of God, the only one that fulfils human nature, our inspirations, feelings and thoughts.

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