



## **Closing Mass**

### **Reflection on the Word**

Phil 2, 1-4; Mc 6, 30-34

24 October 2015.

Dear Brothers

According to Church norms, as an unordained person (I am not a priest, deacon or bishop) I am not authorized to deliver a homily. But like you, by the grace of God, I am a baptized person and nothing less than a son of God. As such, I am a brother to you all. By virtue of this, and relying on the help of the Holy Spirit, I dare to share with you this reflection on today's readings. I have obtained Brother Nelson's permission to speak, and I am confident of your benevolence.

It is said that good things come in small packages. Today's readings are short, yet they are very rich.

The Gospel of Mark tells us that after their first mission "the apostles reassembled with Jesus and told him all they had done and taught" (v. 30). Immediately Jesus invites to them to a remote place to rest: "Come away to a lonely place and rest awhile" (v.31). And behold: "They went off to a place apart where they could be by themselves" (v. 32). The boat is a symbol of the Church in which the faithful gather around Jesus.

A place apart, silence, solitude and repose. Properly understood, rest is indispensable in the exercise of mission. We can summarize the gospel text as follows: Jesus' disciples gather around him to get some rest; they gather following rigorous engagement in mission and before returning anew to the mission.

View the scene: The Apostles, gathered around Jesus. A striking image, a teaching, bespeaking a mode of being and doing. Gathered around Jesus the Apostles recount everything they taught and the marvels they performed on their first mission. We underscore the welcome Jesus gives his friends and the disciples' confidence in Jesus.

Unceasingly, the media demonstrate groups of persons motivated by shared concerns, by similar objectives, by common difficulties and problems, or by a shared success. This is evidenced in the worlds of politics, of work, of entertainment and of sports, etc.

Brothers, we have been assembled for two weeks close to Jesus. The logo of the General Conference is indeed inspirational: we Brothers of the Sacred Heart are gathered as one community around the Heart of God to be near to one another, to be together, to be with Jesus and our brothers; we are also a team called to develop a mission.

During these two weeks we have experienced communion in the Spirit. We are comforted, we are encouraged, as we tighten our fraternal bonds. Forgetting ourselves, we open up to our brothers, resonating with the same dispositions, the same love, and the same affections. They are the attitudes of the mind of Christ Jesus. (cf. Phil 2, 1-4)

It is the love of God that unites us as brothers for a mission of service. At the same time, it is love for our brothers. And it is also love for the people we encounter in our prophetic mission.

The Heart is at the center of our conference logo. The Rule of Life instructs us that Jesus is the center of our lives: "He is our reference point and the center of our motivations, just as he is the very principle of our total self-offering and our apostolic action" (R 112).

The Holy Spirit leads us toward a profound understanding of the scope of the love Jesus has for the Father and for each one of us. This love is manifested in a wondrous way in the open side of Jesus and in his pierced Heart, signs of the mystery of his love, of a constant and unwavering love which sustained Jesus even to the total gift of himself on the cross.

A place apart, silence, solitude, repose. The place of rest near to the Lord may be in our room, the garden, nature, or the community room. God is everywhere. But a most appropriate setting is the chapel, for our faith tells us that Jesus is especially present in the Blessed sacrament. Allow me to say that in the Blessed Sacrament He is more present.

Let us now focus on our prophetic mission among God's people. Jesus and his disciples set out toward the other shore to escape the crowd; yet people from the surrounding towns arrive there on foot before them. The gospel adds: "So as he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length" (Mc 6, 34).

Jesus is the witness of his Father's mercy, of his tenderness and goodness. Jesus teaches, he heals, he reproaches; he consoles and transmits peace and love for life . . . Jesus saves! Jesus is good news for all those he encounters, especially the sinners, for the sick, the unloved, and the poor.

We carry on the mission of Jesus in our day. We place at his disposal our arms, our feet, our minds, our will, our soul--all that we are--saying to him: "Lord Jesus, take my eyes, my ears, my arms, my feet, my mind, my soul and will, take everything I am to continue your mission of offering safety and hope in today's world, and in particular for the neediest of children and youths".

From all that we have said thus far, we see that our fraternal life as consecrated men in the Heart of Jesus and for service to the mission can be summarized in two alternating dimensions of one ongoing movement. These two aspects are: the encounter with

Jesus whereby we draw close to him in a mode of repose; and that encounter with Jesus in those persons for whom we are the good news by means of our apostolic mission. In other words, as we commemorate Jesus who took his rest at the home of friends in Bethany, we pass from the house of repose near to Jesus to the pathways of mission, and then again from the pathways of mission back into restful proximity to the Lord.

At the end of this General Conference I want to thank most sincerely all those who contributed to its realization and success. Thank you to the participants and all those who engaged in its preparation and execution. A special thanks to the members of the generalate community and to the auxiliary personnel.

Through this Eucharist we wish to thank the Lord for everything we have been privileged to experience together during these two weeks. We thank God for the devotion of all who partner with us in our prophetic mission throughout the Institute.

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Hope, our Holy Patrons, Father André Coindre, Brother Xavier, Brother Polycarp and our predecessors, we pray to the Lord that this mission may continue well into the future, ever renewing itself, day by day.

Ametur Cor Jesu! Ametur Cor Mariae!

Rome, 24 October 2015.

Brother José Ignacio Carmona Ollo, S.C.  
Superior General