

In today's Gospel, the risen Jesus appeared to the remaining apostles. They worshipped him, but some doubted. This doubt or hesitation exposes the little faith of some of the disciples, and their hesitation may be the reason why we are told that Jesus approached them. It is always God who makes the initiative, approaching us, to speak to us, to reveal to us.

Here Jesus revealed to them his full authority. In Jesus' temptation in the desert, the devil offers only earthly authority which glimmers and passes. The universal authority is given to Jesus by God the Father, and his authority is the foundation of the command to make disciples of all nations, in terms of baptism into the Church and learning the law of Jesus, which is always a law of love.

It is a duty that Paul speaks of in the Second Reading. For the sake of the Gospel, he became a slave of Christ and a slave of all. Being all things to all people, he proclaimed the Gospel. It is Christ's command to him, and he fulfilled it.

Similarly, the prophet Jeremiah was commanded to prophesy. Despite his protestations, God promised Jeremiah the gift of his transforming power. Jeremiah experienced God's presence-God said to him: Do not be afraid...for I am with you.

In the same way, Jesus tells us as he told the eleven, 'I am with you always, to the end of the age.' This recalls the promise given at Jesus' birth-his name given by God, Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'.

At this point, I want to say that it feels strange for me telling you about the missionary apostolate, seeing that I come from an enclosed, contemplative, monastic Order. What I am going to say you already know. You cannot give to another person what you do not have. The first criterion of being a Christian a disciple, a missionary is to have a relationship with God. We hear in today's Gospel Jesus saying, 'baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' For various reasons, it is not proper to change the divine names used in the baptismal formula, and one of them is simply that 'Father, Son and Spirit' speaks of a relationship with God, and because of that, we experience God – different experiences: being loved, being forgiven, being comforted, etc. It is this ordinary mysticism, this experience of God in the heart of our existence that makes the Christian an authentic disciple and missionary. To give to others God that one has a relationship with and experiences. When others come into contact with us, they can see the great things God has done for us.

Karl Rahner wrote 40 years ago, "The devout Christian of the future will either be a 'mystic', one who has experienced something, or he will cease to be anything at all"¹. The "future" that Rahner spoke about must surely have arrived in the here and now. Spend time, pray reflect, ponder, read, with new eyes, ears and hearts to perceive the approaches of God who wants to be with us, so that we can give to others what we have – namely, God.

¹ Karl Rahner, "Christian Living Formerly and Today" in *Theological Investigations* Vol. VII, trans. David Bourke (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971), 15.