

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

YOU ARE CHRIST



This Sunday's gospel Jesus embarks on a kind of survey to see what people say and think about Him, then He comments on what He has heard. Jesus has been going from village to village for some time. During these long journeys, conversations pleasantly occupy the time. They become serious at times. Here we have one of those moments where Jesus conducts a survey concerning Himself with two questions to his disciples: "According to people, Who am I?" and "For you, Who am I?" They give us a kind of snapshot of Jesus: preacher and healer. People recognize in Him a dimension that is not common. They continue to say John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the prophets. In saying this, people see and put a special relationship between Jesus and God. They do not

know exactly what it is, but they suspect in this man a unique destiny, an extraordinary mission.

The disciples, to answer the question "Who do you think I am?" go further than the people questioned previously. They have been close to Jesus. They listened to Him. He explained to them some of His words, His parables. It is Peter who will become the spokesperson for the group of disciples, and he will affirm without hesitation that for them Jesus is the One Sent by God to bring salvation to the world. He is the Christ The One Who has been chosen and Who has received the anointing of God Who makes Him Savior of all those Who believe in Him and Who receive Him as their personal Savior. Jesus spoke to them about His shocking mission and what will happen to Him as the Messenger of God and Savior of the world. Nothing to do with a Messiah Who suffers, Who is rejected, Who dies and Who resurrects.

We see here, Jesus is already imbued with God's expectations of Him. He has walked and He knows that God's plan for the salvation of humanity passes through a crazy love, a love that gives His own Son for the salvation of all. Let us listen to this intervention of Jesus. "If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." Here, Jesus insists that His disciples look towards Him and walk after Him. Taking up one's cross is nothing other than imitating Jesus, following Him. The important thing is the relationship with Him that draws the disciple into the one that he Himself lives with God His Father. Jesus continues to say, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but

whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." Losing one's life or saving it? But which life are we talking about? We only have one. It is therefore important to direct it in the right direction. Jesus here invites us to make the choices He proposes and to base them on the Beatitudes which are the "identity card" of the true disciple of Jesus as Pope Francis says so well. attains, in the gift of self, true happiness." (GE 63 and 64). The extract from the letter of Saint James read in the second reading invites us to do so with these words: "If someone claims to have faith, without putting it into practice, what use is it?" "Faith, if it is not put into practice, is indeed dead" states this remarkable letter attributed to Saint James.

We have taken a journey listening to Jesus on the paths of the villages at the sources of the Jordan, and Jesus continues to walk with us on the paths of the "villages of today" which are our various occupations, our leisure activities, our personal or community problems such as that of migrants and refugees, our family relationships, our environmental challenges, the Covid19 coronavirus pandemic, our choices for life, etc., these are very lively "villages" in our society, but which are waiting for us to come and reveal the Good News that is Jesus Himself, our Lord and Savior.

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