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Meditations: Wednesday of the Tenth Week of Ordinary Time

Some reflections that can assist our prayer during the tenth week of Ordinary Time.

- Jesus reveals the meaning of the law
- Freedom as the path to Heaven
- The Kingdom and little things

JESUS WAS accused of wanting to destroy the religion of Moses and

Abraham more than once, but He announced that He had not come to abolish it but to reveal its full meaning and deepest scope (cf. *Mt* 5:17). Christ revealed to his contemporaries — and now reveals to us — that it is possible to find a path of authentic interior freedom in the divine precepts. God revealed Himself and gave us his Son to set us free. *For freedom Christ has set us free*, St. Paul says. *Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery* (*Gal* 5:1).

"In the light of Christ's teaching, every precept reveals its full meaning as a requirement of love, and they all come together in the greatest commandment: to love God with all of your heart and to love your neighbour as yourself."[1] Each *letter [and] stroke of a letter* (*Mt* 5:18) of the Church's teaching, whether is is dogmatic, moral, or liturgical, is meant to move us to love our God

and, through Him, the people around us. And love can only be given in freedom, even when, as is normal, it is difficult.

That is why Jesus can say that his food is to do the will of the Father. He does not resign Himself to the Father's will, as if He really wanted to do something different; He ardently desires it and wants to identify all his inclinations with it, because that is where He finds freedom. Christ even goes so far as to thank his Father before carrying out the greatest act of self-giving, on the eve of his Passion, when He freely gives his life in the Eucharist. We find the deepest freedom in God, and it help us love the people around us more and better.

"LET'S CONSIDER what Heaven will be like," St. Josemaria recommended. "*No eyes has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him* (*1 Cor* 2:9). Can you imagine what it will be like to get there, to meet God, and to see that beauty, that love that pours itself into our hearts, that satisfies without satiating? I ask myself many times a day: what will it be like when all the beauty, all the goodness, all the infinite wonder of God is poured into this poor earthen vessel that I am, that we all are?"[2] St. Thomas Aquinas also invited us to look forward to Heaven because "in everlasting life is the full and perfect satisfying of every desire; for there every blessed soul will have to overflowing what he hoped for and desired. The reason is that in this life no one can fulfill all his desires, nor can any created thing fully satisfy the craving of man."[3]

Contemplating Heaven helps us understand this earth, to weigh situations and problems properly. "Since man always remains free and since his freedom is always fragile, the kingdom of good will never be definitively established in this world. Anyone who promises the better world that is guaranteed to last for ever is making a false promise; he is overlooking human freedom. Freedom must constantly be won over for the cause of good."[4]

The struggle for greater and greater freedom on earth, which means being filled more by God and less by our petty selfishness, is the path to Heaven. "And to proceed towards holiness, one must be free: free to go forward, looking at the light, going forward. And when we return, as he says here, to the way of life we had before our encounter with Jesus Christ or when we return to those patterns of worldly behaviour, we

lose our freedom. […] Like the people of God in the desert: when they looked forward everything went fine; when they were nostalgic because they could no longer eat the good things they formerly had, they made mistakes and forgot that they had no freedom back there."[5] With God's grace, we can already prepare ourselves for what we will find in Heaven: choosing God forever, free from all slavery or confusion.

WHOEVER BREAKS one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven (*Mt* 5:19). What connection to *the least of the commandments* have with the kingdom of heaven? Jesus connects the struggle for sanctity

with the ability to love and be loved in everyday life. Ultimately, Heaven is about allowing God to be our loving Father in every moment of the day, knowing that He is with us even in little things. Those who keep *the least of the commandments* get up time and time again without tiring of fighting on the same front, for the same goal. They are honest with themselves and with God and recognise how much they need Him. They put the most important things first and realise that everything is valuable for a soul in love.

"Some people may imagine that there is little to offer God in ordinary life: little things, trifles. A little child who wants to show his father how much he loves him offers the few treasures he has: a spool of thread, a tin soldier with no head, a bottle top… And the father does not disdain the childish gift: he thanks him and embraces his son, holding him close to his heart

with great tenderness. Let us act like this with God, so that our little things, trifles in themselves, become great, because love is great. That is what we do: we make the little things of each day, each moment, heroic out of Love."[6] Mary always says yes to her Son's request, because she knows that this is how God gives joy and happiness. We can ask our Mother to give us the wisdom to see God's will as she does.

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[1] Pope Francis, Angelus, 16-II-2014.

[2] St. Josemaria, Notes from a family gathering, 22-X-1960.

[3] St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Apostles' Creed*, article 12.

[4] Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi*, no. 24.

[5] Pope Francis, Homily, 29-V-2018.

[6] St. Josemaria, *Collected Letters*, Volume I, no. 19.

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