

Week Four/Day Three: *Jesus reveals the Father*

1. **Place yourself in God's presence.**
2. **Ask for the grace that you seek in this meditation:** *knowledge of Jesus Christ so as to love Him more deeply and serve Him with greater fidelity.*
3. **Today's Meditation:**

"Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ"
(Jn 17:3).

How little Christians know God the Father! The main theme of Jesus Christ's teachings was precisely the mystery of His Father. Jesus spent a great deal of His public life speaking with the Father and speaking of the Father, starting from His first public intervention when He was just 12 years old: "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Lk 2:49).

Yet, despite having read or heard the Gospels so many times, how many there are who think that the paternal reality of God is strange or perhaps, understanding it only intellectually, let it influence their lives very little!

From here it follows that confidence in God, which is the foundation of maturity and of a balanced life, is an unknown virtue for many men and women. If the absence of an earthly father or mother is so harmful in the spiritual and psychological development of every human being, a good education of our divine filiation (which is more difficult if there's no earthly paternal figure, but always possible) can mature the hearts of many of those who don't know themselves because they don't know God or, even if they know Him, don't have an intimate relationship with Him.

Devotion to the Father, says Faber, is characterized "by an infinite tenderness." What's more, though, as Émile Guerry points out, "it elevates souls by giving their life the most noble of ideals, that which fills Jesus' entire life: the glory of the Father that frees them, by purifying them of the selfishness that can penetrate even the most sincere devotion, and establishes them in peace, establishing them in the certainty of the infinite Love of the Father, who is full of mercy and goodness."

In the third century, Saint Hippolytus wrote: "Know yourself; i.e., discover God within yourself, for He has formed you after His own image" (Refutation of All Heresies, Bk. 10, 33-34). We could add that you cast aside self-knowledge when you don't know the God who made you; you don't know the God who made you while you have only an abstract, cold, and distant knowledge of Him, ignorant of His living presence in the depths of your soul and while you lack a living and filial contact with Him.

The Father was the heart of Jesus' preaching; the Father called Him, "My Beloved Son." **Have all of us Christians understood it this way? Have we understood Jesus Christ's message?**

How much do we know God the Father?

Perhaps we might know that God is Father, but all the while understanding that divine “fatherhood” in a way that is confused with His status as Creator. For many, including well-formed Christians, God is Father in the sense that He is the cause of all things. Such a mode of divine fatherhood was also acknowledged by many non-Christian religions.

However, this isn’t the sort of fatherhood that Jesus Christ alludes to. If that fatherhood can only be known by the one to whom the Son reveals it, it must therefore concern a fatherhood that is absolutely transcendent, mysterious, and inaccessible to human reason.

What does that divine, revealed fatherhood have that is different from that common divine fatherhood that can be known by human reason?

First and foremost, it entails a communication of life (to be a father means to communicate life) that is completely special: it isn’t simply the giving of being, but rather of God’s personal life itself. God “divinizes” man; He participates His own intimate life.

What’s more, as a father, God desires intimacy with His children, with each one in particular.

Likewise, His love is completely unique, to the point of “sacrificing Himself” for His children, not simply as any real father would do for his little ones, but rather in a way that no earthly father is able to surrender himself (we see this in a particular way with Christ’s death on the cross).

This Father’s capacity to forgive surpasses human understanding. This is why the pagans spoke of God as a common father, but not as one who forgives. They placated Him with sacrifices, but they didn’t thank Him for the forgiveness of sins because His merciful will escaped their understanding.

How far does our knowledge of the Father extend? In the brief letter that he wrote, the Apostle Saint Jude calls us “beloved in God the Father” (Jd 1). **Is this the way we see ourselves? Are we aware of the Father’s heart and of His attitude towards us? Do we live trusting in that fatherly gaze?**

(Taken from: *The Father Revealed by Jesus Christ*, Fr. Miguel Angel Fuentes, IVE)

- Today’s Prayer –

O Jesus living in Mary, come and live in your servant in the Spirit of your holiness, in the fullness of your gifts, in the perfection of your ways, in the truth of your virtues, in the communion of your mysteries. Subdue within me the power of flesh and demon by you Holy Spirit, for the glory of God the Father. Amen.