

10 July 2026 - Friday of the <sup>14th</sup> week - even-numbered year

[Hosea 14, 2-10; Matthew 10, 16-23](#)

## Homily

Today's first reading continues yesterday's beautiful text from the prophet Hosea, calling us to conversion. He calls us to return to the Lord by speaking to him. The formula is both beautiful and surprising: "*Take words with you and return to the Lord*". We sometimes wonder whether it is really necessary to use words in our prayer, since God knows in advance everything we are going to say to him. And yet the prophet tells us "*Take with you words...*". It's because God wants to meet us on our own ground, to converse with us in human language. In the Old Testament, we could say that this was anthropomorphism. But in the New Testament, God became one of us and spoke to us in our own language. The Word of God became human speech. So we can - and must - speak to him. In reality, it is not He who needs to. We do.

The last sentence of the reading from Hosea serves as a link with the Gospel. Hosea says: "*Yes, the paths of the LORD are straight, and the righteous will walk in them, but the rebellious will stumble*"; and, in the Gospel, when Jesus sends his disciples on a mission, he warns them that it will be a difficult and dangerous road. They will have to be cautious as serpents and candid as doves. They must not seek out dangers; on the contrary, they must avoid them. Seeking martyrdom has never been a Christian attitude. The true Christian attitude is to be faithful to the path of the Gospel, whatever the danger, ready to accept all the consequences, including martyrdom if necessary.

Our era, like all previous eras, is rich in martyrs. Many are those who are willing to give their lives to preach and defend the values of the Gospel. But circumstances have changed.

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