

31 July, 2026 -- Friday of the 17th week

[Lv 23, 1. 4-11. 15-16. 27. 34-37; Matt 13, 54-58](#)

Homily

Around the age of thirty, Jesus had left his native village of Nazareth in Galilee to go to Judea. The immediate reason for this is not given in the Gospel. In any case, at that time, as always, there was a movement of people towards Jerusalem, the capital, especially from the hinterland of Galilee. Jesus was in Jerusalem just as the whole of Jerusalem was descending towards the Jordan, in the region of Jericho, to be baptised by John. He was baptised himself and heard the voice of the Father: *'You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased'*. Then John said to his disciples, *'Behold the Lamb of God.'* Several of John's disciples join Jesus, and he calls others. After fasting for forty days in the desert, he set off again for Galilee, where he preached and healed the sick, first in the large town of Capernaum. Finally, one day he returned to his village and began teaching in the synagogue. Everyone was surprised. This surprise clearly showed that up until then, nothing in Jesus' life in Nazareth had set him apart. He had no doubt faithfully celebrated all the festivals of the year with his parents and relatives. No doubt he had also regularly gone to the local synagogue to listen to the teaching of the doctors of the Law. So when he began to preach and heal the sick, people wondered: *'Where did he get this wisdom and these miracles?*

The people of Nazareth thought they knew everything about Jesus because they knew all the external details of his life. They knew him as the son of the village carpenter, they knew his mother and all the other members of his family. They could not imagine that there was more to Him than what appeared. Even less could they imagine that God had entrusted him with a special mission. Their lack of faith made it impossible for him to perform many miracles for them, because Jesus' miracles generally consisted in making the faith of those who approached him bear fruit.

What about ourselves and our attitude towards those we live with or meet? We know a lot about our sisters and brothers. We have seen them live for a long time. We know their qualities, and probably even more about their faults. Unfortunately, we are unaware of all the potential for growth that lies within them. We do not see their capacity for conversion. So when human and spiritual growth occurs in them, we say to ourselves: *'What could be going on? -- Where did this come from? --* And then we often don't allow the miracle of transformation or growth

to happen, or at least to bear fruit.

In a community, and perhaps even more so in a cloistered community, less bombarded by daily novelties, we easily retain the memory of what our sisters or brothers were like a year ago, or five years ago, or ten years ago, and we don't always see what grace has been able to do in them over the years. 'She's always like this! She did this to me on Easter Day, four years ago!...'

To be true, faith in God must be accompanied by faith in others. Let us ask God to allow us to see all the possibilities for growth that he has placed in our brothers and sisters. Let us ask him to have the faith in them that will allow all the miracles of conversion and growth to happen.

* We also celebrate today the liturgical memory of Saint Ignacius of Loyola

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