

The homily on Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
(Bài giảng Chúa Nhật 26 Mùa Thường Niên Năm B)

In our world, there are many bad examples around us. Nowadays, the media is a double-edged sword that causes bad examples to spread rapidly everywhere, causing a nasty pollution for our living environment. The Church is a holy organization, but there are sinners, so there are bad examples that lead many to lose faith. Jesus showed us his unyielding and uncompromising attitude: "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea." (Mark 9: 42).

The first reading clearly shows that the spirit of God is with everyone and everywhere. God not only gave the spirit to Moses, but the spirit of God poured over the seventy elders and two others who did not enter the tent. God chose Moses to lead the people of God, who gave him the spirit. Moses was not selfish. He is generous. Moses prayed to God to give the spirit to the people so that they could become prophets. Joshua was jealous of two men who did not belong to the seventy elders and prophesied in the camp. Joshua asked Moses to stop them. Moses answered, "Would that all the people of the LORD were prophets! Would that the LORD might bestow his spirit on them all!" (Numbers 11:29)

In today's Gospel, St. Mark indicated selfishness of the disciples when they tried to prevent others who did not belong to them to remove the demons in the name of Jesus. Jesus explained to his disciples: "Whoever is not against us is for us." There are two views about one thing: the look of man was jealousy and the look of God was openness and love.

Envy and jealousy need to be avoided by the disciples of Jesus. The Gospel reminds us to live openly and accept others in their differences by the name of Jesus. The philosopher Voltaire said, "Jealousy likes a powerful poison strangles our loving heart." And St. Paul said, "These three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor 13:13) Thus, faith and love will help us to be good disciples witnessing for Jesus by our lives. As Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (Jn 13:35)

Also, Jesus expressed a definitive and severe attitude towards those who cause others to sin, especially to prevent others from coming to God. He warned those who make a bad example that would make a little believer in God to sin.

There is a story about the effects of a bad example. On a train, St. Benedict met a very vulgar passenger. The man talked about the debauchery, and he was delighted and chuckled. Someone reminds him to keep silent, but it was not effective. The train came to a station, the man stepped down. St. Benedict called the man, "Hey, did you forget something?" The man quickly went back the train, looked around and asked, "Forget what?" The saint spoke in a kind but firm tone: "You left a bad impression for the

passengers in the train.” The man was ashamed and went down the train immediately. He was bad, moreover he spread bad things to others.

It is better for one hand, one foot, one eye to keep the whole soul for God instead there is a full body but far from God and being a bad example for others.

Teaching that, Jesus wants us to return to God. Seeking the treasure of heaven instead following the material wealth on the earth. Material wealth is a real need in our lives, but we need to use it for the right purpose. Using it for the sake of the kingdom of God, for our eternal life. If they are useless for our eternal life, cut them off. That is what God desires. That is the counsels of the Gospel.

Today’s Gospel is a very useful lesson. Let us remember that each person has a responsibility to create a good environment around our daily life. That is why we must avoid sin and avoid causing bad examples for others. And we know how to use all our possessions to achieve the true happiness in eternal life. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Matt 16:26)