

Saturday 25 April 2020

Deut.30, 9: *"The LORD will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your ancestors."*

Jn.15, 10-11: Jesus says *"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."*

If we want to realise truly where and how the promise of Deut.30 is true, we must not search history or imagine future scenarios with notions of wealth or of material-worldly delights or of personal wellbeing; we must look at things through the great, central and decisive moment in the revelation of God's ways with man – the cross of Christ.

When we do this, because of the "otherness" of this perspective, we pick up on things entirely different, on things such as the following:

- Jesus' baptism and a voice from heaven saying "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Mt.3, 17)
- "As surely as I live, declares the sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live." (Ez.33,11)
- "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." (2Cor.8,9)
- "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom." (Lk.6, 20)
- "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything" (2Cor.6,10)

This perspective guides us to Christ and to his joy which is the love of God. That joy is to be in us. And when it is -only then – all joy is complete. The cross is about the creation of space for this joy.

*"Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. ... I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead." (Phil.3, 7-11)*