

Tuesday of Second Easter

John 3:7-15

Fr. Thaddeus Nguyen

A conversation in the night of a Jewish wise man with Jesus is interesting enough to catch our attention. Nicodemus the wise, was a Rabbi, proficient in the Holy Scriptures but open-minded. He was not as conservative as the other wise men of his people. He came to see Jesus to get more knowledge about this man, to be clear of suspicion of him, whom people had been talking a lot about.

Being a teacher of the Holy Scriptures, Nicodemus regarded Jesus as a Master, capable in doing marvelous deeds. And he believed that Jesus came from heaven to accomplish the history of Israel. However, his wisdom from learning and education and he wanted to enlarge his knowledge, founded on his basic learning. This time, his human wisdom became an obstacle preventing him from understanding the heavenly realities. For him, the conception of rebirth in water and Holy Spirit is far from understandable, but fantastic to his reasoning.

Through the conversation, Jesus did not cease opening his mind to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Firstly his mind needed to go beyond what is reasonable and logical to human thought. Only when his heart was open to the Holy Spirit, could he understand and accept the new things from heaven.

Eternal life in the heaven of God is not the matter of mind, but it is the desire of the heart. This means that one must be docile to the Holy Spirit to get a purification of mind and then he would get a new heart.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts.

Ezekiel 36:25-26

The everlasting life which Nicodemus was searching for is also a dream of every people. But, this is a graceful present that God has given freely to human kind, through the death of His only Son. This promised life is never an object accessible to philosophical reflection or human effort. Moreover, Christ has affirmed that this new life would be given only to those who believe in his death and resurrection:

Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

John 3:14-15

Therefore, the Resurrection and the Passion are inseparable. Eternal life is not detached from suffering and mortification. In Jesus Christ, if we live every moment in our life in communion with His Passion, our life is reborn and it begins from this moment, the new life in Resurrection with Christ.