

In today's Gospel reading we hear about the circumcision of the Lord, about how his parents go with Jesus to the Passover in Jerusalem and how they lost Him there and Jesus' reaction to it.

As in every Gospel reading, this reading has many aspects, many clues to the spiritual life. One of those aspects, and I would like to highlight this one this time, is how the parents of Jesus and also Jesus himself live with the Tradition, the Sacred Tradition and in their case that was the Jewish tradition, the Sacred Tradition until the moment the Messiah appears. Jesus is circumcised on the eighth day, according to Tradition, and his parents go with Him to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, according to tradition. This is not an obligation, not a must, but it is in their blood, in their nature, they live with that tradition, they themselves are an integral part of that tradition. Their whole life is intertwined with it, it's the way God speaks to them and it's the way they speak to God, thanking and honoring Him for all that He is. We hope that one day it would be so with us, but we come from quite a different background, well, most of us, and we're going to have to make it our own, we're going to have to acquire it. That's what we have the Church for, because the Church is Christ and He speaks through Sacred Tradition. And the more we immerse ourselves in that Church, the more our nature will be one with Sacred Tradition. Then we no longer have to think about what we "should" do, but it comes naturally. Then we feel, for example, that the feast of the Theophany is approaching and how we look forward to being there. How we want to be there when the water is blessed and want to drink the water and how we want our house to be blessed too. All that is also the Sacred Tradition. Just as the family where Christ grew up lived in that tradition, so do we want to live in it.

Then there is another aspect that I would like to highlight. The twelve year old Jesus is missing and turns out to be in the house of His Heavenly Father, the Temple and it is clear; that's where he belongs. His parents, who had been terribly worried, do not understand Him, but He still goes back with them to Nazareth and "He was subject to them" The Son of God is not understood by His parents and yet He goes back with them to their house. Why? Because God gave it that way, because it is good in God's eyes for now. There is a enormous lesson in this, namely that we encounter so much in our lives that is not good in our eyes and that we still have to live with. To begin with, our own shortcomings, but also the shortcomings of others or situations in our daily life that we do not find good. In the case of Jesus, in this Gospel reading it says so beautifully; "They did not understand what He meant, but He went with them to Nazareth and was subject to them." He was subject to them, so he did what they desired because God had given Him these parents and that was His work; to be submissive to them. Like a twelve year old should be. As we must be submissive to the things that God has given to us. God gives us beautiful things and less beautiful things, situations that we would rather not have. But as long as we know and face that God has given it to us, it is good and full of Grace to be submissive to that situation. Do not forget that; there is tremendous Grace in accepting things as God gives them to us.