

Widow of Nain

Nain was a town well known by Jesus, six miles from Nazareth. He would have known the son and his mother. Maybe he even coincided with the boy at the synagogue school. Jesus was passing by the town with his disciples. This is how we normally imagine Jesus, walking through the streets of Galilee. This is how we should see ourselves too, walking with Jesus through the paths of the earth, meeting him at the crossroads of this world.

Two processions met at this particular moment: Jesus with his disciples, and a funeral burial. Two completely different crowds, with opposite atmospheres: one joyful and festive; the other somber and sad. Life and death met together through divine providence. Few minutes before or after they would have missed each other. We wouldn't be talking now about their encounter. How unpredictable and mysterious are the ways of the Lord! How God uses little coincidences to develop his plans! And we are still thinking that we are in control.

It is Jesus passing by, God coming out to meet us, specially when we are almost dead or morning, like the widow of Nain. We think that God is hiding from us, and it is the other way around. We think that God is constantly putting obstacles in our way to find him, and we are the ones building walls to protect us from his presence. We either hide from him or we tell him to go away. Before we were born, God already loved us, he created us without asking us permission. He has been always around us, protecting us, helping us, healing us. Always in the background, not imposing his will, respecting our freedom. Like the father of the prodigal son, allowing us to go away when we ask for our inheritance; also waiting for us to come back, looking constantly through the window, and running towards us when we decide to come back. We complain when God is imposing his will on us, and we complain again when he doesn't show his face. We are the spoiled son who is never happy because we are self centred.

The question is not how to find God, but how to let him come to us; it is not how to love God, but allowing ourselves to be loved. Instead of constantly resisting his help, ignoring him, fighting with him, it is better to abandon ourselves in his hands, and letting him carry us in his powerful arms. It is the passive attitude of a baby who allows himself to be looked after, just sleeping, eating and dirting nappies. Deep down our insecurities don't allow us to be loved by God. We think we are not worthy of God's love. God's love is unconditional, unlimited, regardless of our achievements. God loves us because he created us in the way we are, not in the way we think we are, or in the way we would like to be.

When Jesus saw the widow, he was moved by compassion. It wasn't in his plans to perform the miracle, but his heart won the day. We forget that Jesus has a human heart, that feels like ours, open to each one of us, a hundred percent ready for us. He stopped the procession, healed the son and gave him to his mother. He did the same thing at Calvary: he saved us and gave us to his mother.