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October 23, 2026 - Friday of the 29th week (even years)

Eph 4:1-6; Luke 12:54-59

Homily

Today we finish reading the long chapter 12 of Luke's Gospel, which brings together a large number of teachings of Jesus given in different circumstances. The fact that we do not know the circumstances in most cases makes it more difficult to interpret these stories. Today's two little '*logia*' are words of wisdom that can obviously be applied to any situation.

In the first case, Jesus is speaking to farmers and probably also to fishermen in Galilee, who had learned to live in communion with nature and who knew how to predict, by looking at the clouds and examining the direction of the wind, what the weather would be like the next day (they were probably as accurate as our radio or TV weathermen who tell us at time that there is a 50% chance of good weather or a 50% chance of rain).) Jesus seems to admire their ability to predict the weather, and he reproaches them for not being as good at recognizing the weather in which they live.

Jesus therefore calls on his disciples to use their intelligence, experience and judgement to discern the signs of the times. These signs do not reveal their meaning without serious and thorough analysis. This is an essential aspect of the contemplative life - a contemplative activity. The contemplative attitude consists in listening constantly to the Word of God. God speaks to us through the Scriptures and Tradition, he speaks to each of our hearts, but he also speaks to us through the events of the life of the world and of the Church - what Vatican II calls the "*signs of the times*".

We, nuns and monks, who are not directly involved in the great works of Society and the Ecclesiastical Institution, and can look at the whole landscape with a certain distance, have a special responsibility to make this analysis. It is not enough to pray for the world in general and to line up prayer intentions as accidents or calamities occur. We have a duty to analyze these events with all the rigor required for discernment of such importance, in order to "*recognize in them the moment in which we are*", to use Jesus' expression.

When the world experiences human disasters of particular magnitude, it is perhaps, at least in part, because the "spiritual" have neglected this task and left it to the politicians, economists and military to do their own analysis.

Of course, it is also at the community and personal level that we must recognise the time in which we live, with its challenges and its graces. And at this level too we cannot do without a serious analysis, both at the community and individual levels. Let us constantly look at which way the clouds are rising and in which direction the wind is blowing!

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