

3 October 2026 Saturday, 26th even-numbered week

[Job 42,1-3,5-6,12-17; Luke 10,17-24](#)

Dear Brothers,

For several days now, the first Eucharistic reading of the week has been taken from the Book of Job, and today we are finishing precisely this book, which is very important from the point of view of monastic tradition – for several reasons. It is important, of course, because of its central theme of suffering, which prepares us for the New Testament teaching on the mystery of the Cross. The author of the book is reacting against the traditional teaching that God is just and therefore rewards the good and punishes the wicked. To this theory, the book of Job contrasts a concrete man, who is as good as they come, and yet is terribly afflicted. He wants to understand the mystery of suffering, and in the end he has no explanation. It is an unfathomable mystery. Suffering has no meaning. There's no point in trying to make sense of it. And in the New Testament, the Son of God will give an answer, not by explaining the mystery of suffering, but by taking it on, by dying on the Cross and thus finally giving it meaning. If God suffered, suffering certainly has a meaning, and it is a meaning of redemption. All our sufferings, great and small, take on their meaning -- the only meaning they can have -- by being a participation in the Cross of Christ, in that suffering freely assumed out of love – not out of love for suffering, but out of love for man.

But there is also something else in the Book of Job that is important for us nuns and monks. The story of Job describes very well the journey of continual stripping away that we must make to arrive at the purity of heart that will allow us to see God. Job is the person who possesses everything in which human beings normally find their security and identity. He has everything going for him. He has material wealth; he has a wife and children, good health and friends and also a very high social status. Then all this was taken away from him. Job then makes the marvellous discovery, not without crisis and rebellion, that, having lost everything he had, he continues to be, and, having nothing left to lose, he acquires that freedom which enables him to stand before God and speak freely to him. The whole journey of monastic conversion described in our Constitutions and our document on formation consists of this gradual stripping away of all our false human securities. When it is difficult or impossible for us to speak freely to God – or to our brothers and sisters – it is because we still have some possession to defend: it may simply be our image, our reputation, our name.

After this transformation, Job can once again receive everything, including seven sons and three daughters with enchanting names! He now receives everything as a free gift from God and not as the fruit of his own efforts. He has become a free man.

And today's Gospel has no different message. It comes from that series of teachings that Luke puts together during Jesus' ascent to Jerusalem, and which we have been reading for the last few days, and which begin with the enumeration of the radical demands of following Christ: 'Let the dead bury their dead. You, go and tell the good news' -- "He who puts his hand to the plough and looks back...". Then Jesus sends his disciples out on mission, two by two. And when they return, rejoicing at their success - they've managed to drive out the evil spirits - Jesus reminds them of what was already the ultimate lesson of the Book of Job. This is not their doing; it has been given to them. And it was given to them because they left everything to follow Christ and became 'little ones'.

And then Jesus himself rejoices when he speaks to his Father, because this message, hidden from the great and powerful, has been revealed to those who have made themselves small. And it is certainly not out of place, a few days after the Feast of Little Thérèse, to recall that this is also the meaning of Spiritual Childhood. In the Gospel, Jesus never calls us to remain children. He calls us to 'become children'. This is very different. To become a child, you must first have become an adult and then go beyond that. The path of spiritual childhood is the path of self-denial that leads to freedom, like that experienced by Thérèse and already described, in a way, in the Book of Job.

Let us ask the Lord for ourselves, and for one another, for this gift of poverty of heart, of stripping ourselves of everything that holds us back, in order to achieve the freedom and purity of heart that enable us to **see God**.

Armand Veilleux