

Bishop Jaime Soto – Homily for Saturday,
February 20, 2010
Rite of Election

I Samuel 3.1-10
John 1.29-34

Juan el Bautista nos indicó que el Señor Jesús era “el Cordero de Dios, el que quita el pecado de mundo.” Con estas palabras proclamadas al principio de la misión salvadora de Jesús, San Juan nos presentó a Jesús y su misión salvadora.

La lectura nos regala tres luces que esclarecen para nosotros lo significativo del acontecimiento ritual de hoy.

En primero, Juan reconoció a Jesús porque “el verbo se hizo carne y habitó entre nosotros.” (Jn. 1.14) Jesús aceptó nuestra condición humana. Se hizo uno con nosotros en este caminar de vida. Por este gesto preferencial, nosotros, como Juan, ya pudiéramos reconocer a Dios. Además, por ser bautizado por Juan en el Jordán tomó la responsabilidad de encaminar al pueblo humano por la conversión y la reconciliación con Dios. Cristo se unió a nuestra humanidad para que nosotros pudiéramos unirnos a su divinidad.

Segundo, el título “Cordero de Dios” nos indica que Jesús vino para ofrecerse como víctima de sacrificio. San Pablo nos dijo esto en la carta a los Filipenses, “Encontrándose en la condición humana, se rebajó a sí mismo haciéndose obediente hasta la muerte, y muerte de cruz.” (Fil. 2.7-8) El bautismo de Jesús fue el momento de su consagración a la misión expiatoria. Nuestro bautismo nos permite participar en esta obra salvadora. Ahora, juntos con Jesús nos presentamos dispuestos a ofrecernos a Dios por medio del bautismo.

La tercera aclaración en la lectura de hoy, el Cristo nos bautizará con el Espíritu Santo. El mismo Espíritu que animó la vida de Jesús vivificará la vida de todos ustedes y renovará la vida de toda la iglesia.

La presencia de todos ustedes hoy día es causa de alegría para toda la Iglesia. Nuestro Buen Pastor, el Señor Jesús, los mira con ojos sonrientes. La respuesta afirmativa de ustedes a la tierna voz de Pastor divino hace brotar de gozo Su sagrado corazón. Ahora, como buen pastor y buen amigo tomará la mano de cada uno para llevarles por este paso a los ritos místicos de la Vigilia Pascual. Aunque todavía queda unas pocas semanas antes de aquella noche gloriosa, en estos días cuaresmales la preparación comenzará más en serio. Junto con el bondadoso pastor, quien dio su vida por sus ovejas, todo nosotros caminaremos con ustedes hacia la pila bautismal, la unción del Espíritu Santo, y la mesa eucarística. Los sacramentos pascales, que pronto ustedes recibirán, transformarán a todos en un pueblo elegido, nación consagrada, sacerdocio real, hijos dichosos en que Dios Padre ha puesto toda Su complacencia.

Young Samuel was chosen by God to be his prophet. God, as he always does, took the initiative. He chose Samuel to be his messenger and to be his friend. This is repeated at different times throughout the scriptures. Samuel was a friend of God. He knew not only the Lord's word. He knew the Lord's heart.

The Lord God has chosen you to be his disciple. He has also chosen you to be his friend. In the gospel according to John, we will hear the Lord Jesus speak to us in these words: "I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you." (Jn. 15.15-16)

Since the moment you were conceived this has been true. You have come here tonight because you now believe what God has always believed about you. Like Samuel your own hearts may have been asleep or perhaps too distracted to know that your creator has been calling you, calling out to you so that he could save you.

Samuel came to know his calling, his election, because of three things: He was resting in God's holy temple. He trusted the wisdom and guidance of Eli. He responded to the Lord's voice and grew to become the Lord's friend.

You have grown and will continue to grow in the knowledge of the Lord's call in much the same way. Find your rest in the Lord's presence, in his holy temple. This place is certainly the Churches where you have been attending but it is not just these physical spaces. Each Parish community is also a dwelling place of living stone into which you too are being built up as a holy temple where the spirit will dwell.

You have received the wisdom and guidance of your priests, your catechists, and your sponsors. They are Eli helping you to recognize the Lord's voice. I share your gratitude for their companionship on this journey. We all need Eli, those who will walk with us on this journey.

As you came to discover the voice of the Good Shepherd, you have chosen to respond. We all rejoice for you. We will pray for you as you grow to know more clearly the voice of this Good Shepherd and come to know him as your good friend.