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GOSPEL PEARLS

Not recognizing the Lord who passes by

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him. (Jn 1,1-18)

As Saint Augustine affirmed, one of the greatest risks for us is to not recognize the Lord who passes by. Many times in our history we underestimate those whom we think we already know. We are led by our lazy habit to label others and we do not leave room in our hearts for God's imagination. This also happened to Jesus' contemporaries. In today's Gospel, Saint John emphasizes this twice: the world did not recognize him and also "his own" did not receive him. May we recognize Jesus each day as the Lord of our life, so that we may not be among those who do not receive Him.