**FRAGMENTS OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY**

**(How to be good disciples of Jesus today)**

**Catanzaro 12 November 2018**

**THIRST FOR FAITH**

**Who has true thirst for faith? Who has true thirst for the Word has a real thirst for faith. Who has true thirst for Word? He has real thirst for the Word who has a real thirst for God. Who has true thirst for God? Who has true thirst to love the Lord in truth.**

**Love gives the thirst for God. The thirst for God gives thirst for the Word. Thirst for the Word gives thirst for the truth. Thirst for truth feeds thirst for faith. The thirst for faith must be created in hearts, in every heart.**

**How is thirst for the true faith created? Through the vision of its fruit. The Christian lives of very pure love for His God, Creator, Father and Lord, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. The other sees and falls in love.**

**Today evangelization or the creation of true faith in the hearts must be done by falling in love. One falls in love with what one sees, tastes, contemplates and is admired. The Christian must be a person to be admired.**

**Before Jesus the crowds remained amazed and admired. If one is not surprised and admired before the Christian for the beauty of his faith, the Word serves no purpose. The Christian must attract and not reject.**

**In truth, there are many Christians who turn people awy from faith because of their vices, transgressions and sins. They can also preach, teach and train. The vice turns away. Virtue attracts. Disobedience always keeps away.**

**Obedience always brings closer to Christ and his mystery. Ignorance turns away and truth draws near. The word of men leaves people indifferent. The Word of Jesus enters the heart and sets it in motion. Big difference.**

**If the Christian does not show the beauty of his faith, might anyone ever approach the Gospel? Nobody. No one can because what is ugly rejects, does not attract, does not conquer, does not seduce and does not kidnap.**

**It is right then that each of us asks himself before God and lets himself be given the answer from the Holy Spirit. Lord, does my faith attract or turn away? Also ask yourself: what is my faith based on? What are its pillars?**

**Is my faith based on truth or lies? Is it based on one of my truths or on the truth of the Holy Spirit? Is it founded on the Word of Christ Jesus or of men? Is it based on rock or sand?**

**Ask yourself again: Do I hear the Word from Christ's ministers or do I build my faith day by day to my taste and desire? Do I obey the ministers of Christ or walk from myself and for myself?**

**Do I impose my thoughts, my views, my aspirations and my desires on others, or do I hand myself simply over to a pure and simple listening of the Word according to the teaching of the Church and her doctrine?**

**The questions can be a thousand and a thousand others. True faith comes from knowledge of the truth of Christ in the Holy Spirit through the Church's teaching ministry. Out of this way there is no true faith.**

**The Father gives his Word to Christ in the Holy Spirit. Christ in the Holy Spirit gives his Word to his Apostles. The Apostles in the Holy Spirit must give it to every other man. Faith is always lived with the Apostles.**

**MERCY FORGIVENESS JUSTICE LOVE**

**MERCY. Mercy is God's heart perpetually directed towards man, always intent on creating a way of salvation and redemption for the creature made by Him in his image and likeness.**

**Mercy is the eternal will of true salvation. When no true path to true salvation is sought for every man, there is not even true mercy. True salvation, true mercy and true charity.**

**What is true for our God, also applies to each of his adopted children in Christ Jesus. It also applies to every other man. It is useless to give man a good of the earth if we do not give the eternal good. Man is immortal.**

**Mercy, which for us Christians and for every other, is the gift of Christ Crucified made to us by the Father, can be accepted, but it can also be rejected. It can be lived or ignored. The consequences are eternal.**

**When mercy is accepted in its truth, when it transforms us into people rich in mercy. If accepted mercy does not make us people of mercy, it is not accepted according to truth.**

**FORGIVENESS. Forgiveness is the cancellation of the sin and punishment on the part of the Lord to the man who has sinned. To access the Lord's forgiveness, certain conditions must be fulfilled. The first is repentance.**

**Repentance is in the knowledge of evil done to God. With sin we have seriously offended our God. Having known the gravity of evil, we repent of it. True conversion must follow with repentance.**

**What is true conversion? It is our return to the Covenant, the Law, the Gospel and the truth, with an obedience to every Word that came out of the mouth of the Lord. Finally, the request for forgiveness from the Lord follows.**

**Another condition to be forgiven is the forgiveness we gave to each of our debtors. God forgives us if we forgive. We do not forgive and neither does God forgive us. Reconciliation with men is necessary.**

**LOVE. In Holy Scripture loving God is the first Commandment of the Law. Loving the neighbour as ourselves is the second. But how do we love God and our neighbour? As we want the highest good of God and of neighbour.**

**We love God and our neighbour with a full, total and perfect obedience to every commandment of the Lord. Commandments to be lived are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are also the duties that arise from every sacrament.**

**Commandments are also the multiple vocations and ministries entrusted to every single person. The Pope must love as Pope, the Bishop as Bishop and so the Presbyter the Deacon, the Confirmed, the Baptized and the Married.**

**To love is to give to God and to the neighbour what the Lord our God wants to be given. What is the gift to give? The full, perfect, total, perennial obedience to his every Word, his will, his grace and his charisma.**

**JUSTICE. God's justice is fidelity to his every Word. For justice God gives Paradise to those who have obeyed his Word. Out of justice, he removes from his eternal kingdom those who rebel against his will.**

**If God were not right, his Word would have no value for men. If obedience and disobedience produce the same fruit, the Word of God is vain. You don't even need to obey. The fruits are the same.**

**But nature tells us that this is not the case. If the earth is worked, it produces. If it is not processed, it only gives birth to thorns and other bad herbs. The earth is just. It donates to those who give it. It does not give to those who do not give it.**

**This truth applies to every other reality. It is justice for man to give God obedience to his Word and to his voice. It is justice for the Lord to give to man what was promised in the Word. God is eternally just.**

**GROWING IN WISDOM AND JUSTICE**

**The more you grow in wisdom and the more you know God's will concerning your life. The more the will of God is fulfilled, the more you grow in justice. How do you grow in wisdom? What ways does the Word of God indicate?**

**We grow in wisdom by listening to the teaching of the Apostles who give us an understanding of the Word. Through the reading and meditation of the Word. Through requests in the Prayer.**

**These three ways must walk together. Never one without the others. The way of the apostles, the way of reading and meditation of Scriptures and the way of prayer must never be separated, never taken one without the others.**

**We grow in wisdom walking in the Holy Spirit and letting ourselves be led by Him to the whole truth. The truth is that contained in the Word of Christ Jesus. The Gospel is for us the only possible wisdom.**

**The more we enter into the truth of the Gospel and the more we are wise. The less we enter and the less we are wise. Instead, in justice we grow by obeying every Word of the Gospel known according to wisdom and perfect truths.**

**Without wisdom there is no obedience. Without obedience there is no wisdom. Wisdom is only in obedience. One does not obey, he is not wise. He is foolish and ignorant. Wisdom is the four cardinal virtues.**

**Who possesses these four virtues, enlightened in us by the Holy Spirit, he can always guide and direct his life in the most perfect obedience to the will of God. The more we are wise and the more obedient. It is an eternal truth.**

**But it is also an eternal truth: the more one is obedient and the more he is wise. Wisdom and obedience are perfect only when even the smallest or minimum precepts of the Law of the Lord and of his Gospel are made ours.**

**THIRST FOR EDUCATION**

**The thirst for education must consume the soul and spirit of the disciple of Jesus. But what is education and how is it acquired? Education is the thirst that wants to know everything about our God to love everything about Him.**

**It is not an instruction with an end in itself. Instead it is an instruction that has as its goal the greatest love for our God. The more one knows and the more he loves. The more you love, the more you want to know. Knowledge has its own way.**

**What is the way to reach true education and true knowledge? The first way is that of listening. Listening is a given teaching. Who can give the true teaching? Who can talk to men according to truth.**

**Only those who listen to the Holy Spirit according to truth. Christ Jesus listens to the Spirit, speaks according to truth. The Apostles listen to the Spirit, speak according to truth. They do not listen to the Spirit, they do not speak according to truth.**

**No one can be a true master of others if he is not a true disciple of the Spirit. True discipleship makes the true master. One is thirsty to listen to the Holy Spirit, he is also thirsty for true education.**

**But if the Spirit is not listened to, neither is there a thirst for true education. One is a teacher according to men, never according to the Spirit. The Spirit speaks through a direct and a mediate way. Both routes must be run through.**

**Spirit, Gospel, Apostles, Ministers of the Word, disciples of Jesus, history: they are one voice of the Holy Spirit. Who is thirsty for true education must be attentive to every voice through which the Spirit speaks to the heart.**

**Today the Christian is incapable of listening to the voice of history, because he has lost all contact with the other voices through which the Holy Spirit speaks to him. When one of these voices fails, listening gets stuck.**

**Today we live with a jammed listening, because everyone has locked himself in his heart, closing and imprisoning the Holy Spirit in his heart. We must never forget the other voices of the Spirit. They are all necessary.**

**THIRST FOR RESPONSIBILITY**

**There will never be a thirst for responsibility if we ignore that the responsibility is not before men, but before the Lord. We must be accountable to Him for every action of our life. The responsibility is manifold.**

**First of all it concerns every sacrament received. Each sacrament creates a new nature in us. We are responsibilities before God forever, for every fruit not produced by our new nature.**

**The baptized person is responsible for his sacrament and thus the confirmed one, the deacon, the presbyter, the bishop, the pope for his charisma and the special ministry, the married, the sick person, the sinner and who receives the Eucharist.**

**We are responsible before God for every other gift of grace and truth granted to us. We are responsible for every vocation and every ministry assumed. We are responsible for every ecclesial and social assignment received or sought.**

**Knowing that our eternal judgment depends on every gift offered to us by the Lord - even being Christians charges us with universal responsibility - everyone must strive to produce according to evangelical truth.**

**Today we can be omitting in our multiple responsibilities for infinite reasons. But tomorrow we will have to give an account to the Lord, to our Judge, of every omission but also of every bad fruiting.**

**Being thirsty for responsibility means putting all attention, all diligence, all wisdom, all intelligence, all strength in the Holy Spirit and every other gift of his in order to work everything from the Will of God.**

**THIRST FOR IMITATION**

**Imitation is not in repeating what Jesus, the Mother of God, the Saints did. Instead, it is doing everything by imitating their virtues: faith, hope, charity, justice, fortitude, temperance, prudence, humility, meekness and simplicity.**

**Jesus asks his disciples to learn from Him who is meek and humble at heart. With meekness He teaches us how to live the passion also through crucifixion and with humility he teaches us to be always servants of the Lord.**

**Saint Paul asks to imitate in him what they see as an imitation of Christ Jesus in him. What does Paul imitate of Christ Jesus? His thirst for souls. His missionary zeal. The consummation of life for the Gospel.**

**THIRST FOR BLESSED ETERNITY**

**If thirst for Paradise grows in our hearts, our obedience will always be prompt and immediate. If we lose sight of eternal bliss, the Word of God also gradually disappears from our mind.**

**Today there is no more thirst for blessed eternity, because falsehood, lies, bad teaching and heresy are crying out that Paradise is for everyone, regardless of our works. We are no longer responsible.**

**If we can live as we please and in the end there will be Paradise for everyone: Judas might betray the Master, Caiaphas condemn him to death, Pilate deliver him to be crucified and the soldiers might nail him down.**

**ON THE WAY OF JUSTICE**

**Here is our vocation: walking on the path of justice. But what is justice for a disciple of Jesus? Obeying every precept of the Law of the Lord, fulfilling every precept He gave to men.**

**For the Christian, justice means letting be led by the Holy Spirit to the whole truth, so that it is transformed into his life, his history and his nature. Justice for the Christian is to transform his nature into most pure truth.**

**SHORT FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**It is sufficient to modify the truth contained in one Word of Scripture, to have a substantial change in the whole structure of faith. Let us try to ask ourselves what the truth contained in these words is: mercy, forgiveness, love and justice. All the ailments of our faith will come to light immediately. The whole deposit of revelation is polluted with a wrong interpretation. Pollution in the faith today is widespread.**

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**May the Mother of God help us to preserve in the great purity the truths of our faith. May the Angels and Saints watch over our teaching, preaching and doctrine.**