**FRAGMENTS OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY**

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

***Catanzaro April 15, 2019***

**CALLED TO CONVERSION**

**Conversion is moral, theological, spiritual, prophetic, dogmatic, ascetic, mystical, philosophical, anthropological, scientific, cultural, social, political, economic and financial. Man is called to always transcend himself. He is a being in the making. Staticity does not belong to him.**

**The first conversion is the moral one. It marks the transition from sin to grace, from disobedience to obedience, from idolatry to worship in spirit and truth, from immorality to sound morality, from vice to virtues and from man's thought to the thought of God.**

**This passage occurs by observing all the Commandments, the Statutes, the Laws and the Norms given by the Lord, by the living and true God, to man. For the Christian, true conversion is the handing over of his life to the whole Gospel, obeying every precept given by Christ Jesus.**

**Without this conversion, all the others do not serve man, because they leave him in spiritual death. Without this conversion, all the others are lived in falsehood and not in truth, in foolishness and not in wisdom, for evil and not for good, for darkness and not for light.**

**When a man lives in the Gospel, then he will always be guided by the Holy Spirit and every other conversion will bring complete fulfillment to his life, because he will always add new light for the understanding of the gospel truth and for a full obedience to it.**

**Conversion is theological when truth is added to the truth of the gospel. It is spiritual if you move from a weak and fragile spirit to an ever stronger, resolute spirit. It is prophetic when one walks in the present will that the Lord manifests through his prophets.**

**It is dogmatic when to a defined truth another defined truth is added which gives a wider vision of the mystery. The Church with her Ecumenical Councils has always walked from dogmatic truth to dogmatic truth. The posteriour dogma has always illuminated the front dogma.**

**Conversion is ascetic when one grows from virtue to virtue. This conversion asks St. Peter to the Christians of yesterday, today and forever: “Make every effort to add virtue to your faith, knowledge to virtue, temperance to knowledge and patience to temperance.**

**Piety to patience, fraternal love to piety, charity to fraternal love. These gifts, present in you and made to grow, will not leave you idle and fruitless for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Instead those who do not have them are blind.**

**He is incapable of seeing and remembering that he has been cleansed of his ancient sins" (2Pe 1,5-9). It is mystical when you constantly rise in love until you reach the top of it. It is philosophical, when helped by reason, we let ourselves be led to ever more complete and sound truths.**

**It is anthropological when we abandon forms and ways of living that do not manifest all the richness of the mystery written by God in our nature. The mystery of God is infinite and even our nature, participating in it, must be able to express all its beauty and wisdom.**

**It is scientific when it makes use of science to improve living conditions. It is true if it improves the whole man and every man. It is false conversion when it destroys nature and man. It is cultural when all forms of life that are not of human nature are abandoned.**

**Today we must confess that there is a great, general and universal involution. Culturally, we regressed not centuries, but millennia. In a few years, the total, full and global dissolution of every principle of truth and wisdom that marks the greatness of man has been reached.**

**From a culture for life we ​​have come to a culture for death. From a culture of communion to a culture of selfishness. From a culture in search of good to a culture in search of evil. The culture of true morality has been replaced with the culture of immorality.**

**It is social because men were created to live together, on the same earth. It will be possible to live together if everyone takes away from the heart what is moral evil and pursues only the law of the greatest good. From hatred one must convert to love, from contempt to respect.**

**It is political because it is obliged to seek the good of every man. Since every man is a political person by nature, because he is called to live with every other man, he is obliged to always seek the greatest good towards everyone, never towards one side only. It is an obligation of nature.**

**It is economic because no man was created to live only for himself, working for himself. He must also live and work for the good of his brothers. This too is a law of nature. When the laws of nature are not observed, the economy also becomes a structure of death.**

**It is financial because the profit must never be at the expense of someone. Everything man wants to earn must be the result of his work. Everything that is used by us, but it is not sweat on our forehead is against the law of nature. speculation is a death plague.**

**All these conversions oblige the disciple of Jesus because they are all contained in the Gospel of salvation. In these conversions the Christian will have to grow every day. If he omits these conversions, he might not bear witness to Christ Jesus. He is not light.**

**The Christian is called to be moral, theological, spiritual, prophetic, dogmatic, ascetic, mystical, anthropological, philosophical, scientific, cultural, social, political, economic and financial light before the world. In no light must he shine less. He will have to excel in all.**

**PERSEVERING TILL THE END**

**When one begins the path of conversion, he must persevere in it without ever failing. Starting and then not completing serves no purpose. The temptation for this assails us day after day: so that we go back from the path taken. If you fall it is the end.**

**What Jesus teaches in his Gospel, must be carefully meditated: When the impure spirit comes out of a man, he wanders around deserted places looking for relief, but does not find any. Then he says: "I will return to my house, from which I came out." And having come he finds it empty, swept and adorned.**

**Then he goes, takes seven other spirits worse than him, they enter and take up residence there; and the latter condition of that man becomes worse than the former. The same will happen to this wicked generation" (Mt 12: 43-45). Nobody knows what the damages of returning are.**

**We fall into that spiritual sloth and that moral insensitivity that makes us also swallow the camels of the transgression of every commandment of the law of the Lord. False testimony is said against the brothers. Adulterers are committed and it is as if they were eating popcorn.**

**You fall into idolatry and you don't even notice it. We live outside the Gospel and we want to remedy it by reciting some daily ejaculations. Here is the moral condition of the Christian, just as the prophet Isaiah describes it to us: «Why do you offer me your sacrifices without number? - says the Lord.**

**I am satisfied with the burnings of rams and the fat of plump calves. I don't like the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to present yourselves to me, who ask you this:**

**that you come to trample my halls? Stop making unnecessary offers; for me incense is an abomination, the new moons, Saturdays and sacred assemblies: I cannot bear crime and solemnity. I hate your new moons and your feasts; for me they are a burden and I'm tired of bearing them.**

**When you stretch out your hands, I take my eyes off you. Even if you multiplied your prayers, I would not listen: your hands are dripping with blood. Wash yourselves, purify yourselves, remove the evil of your actions from my eyes. Stop doing evil, learn how to do good.**

**Seek justice, help the oppressed, do justice to the orphan, defend the cause of the widow." "Come on, come and let's discuss - says the Lord. Even if your sins were scarlet, they will turn as white as snow.**

**If they were red like purple, they would become like wool. If you are docile and listen, you will eat the fruits of the earth. But if you persist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword, because the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Is 1,11-20). Insensitivity and sloth to the law is great and universal.**

**The whole will of God is replaced with the will of man. Religion becomes the elevation of man's will to a law of moral behavior. Today we have come to declare every law of death, immorality, destruction of nature and demolition of any moral value, the law of life.**

**ACCOMPANIED BY THE VIRGIN MARY**

**The Virgin Mary began her journey with Jesus to Nazareth. This journey will end when Jesus is on Golgotha, crucified for the redemption of the world. Mary accompanied Jesus with an uninterrupted prayer, asking the Father for every strength for her Son.**

**We too will be accompanied by the Virgin Mary, if we also take the cross of the Gospel on our shoulders and remind it to every man, according to the will of our Mother. When we run through our ways, often also ways of sin, you might not accompany us.**

**We will be left to ourselves. Might others accompany us? Neither. We are out of the grace of the Lord, because we have failed in the mission that we have taken on. When we fall from the mission, we always fall into sin. We are without celestial accompaniment.**

**When a commitment is made with the Virgin Mary, one must be faithful to this commitment until death. Whoever promised to remind the world the Word of her Son Jesus must die by fulfilling this mission. In this mission you are not alone. There is she that accompanies us.**

**Why do we often fall? Because we fail to observe the spiritual rules, which must always be lived. Faithfulness to the Mother of God is possible if one is faithful to obedience to the Gospel and to the grace of the sacraments. Without these fundamental loyalties, no other one is possible.**

**Being faithful to the Gospel means daily commitment to live every one of its prescriptions, starting from the Law of forgiveness and mercy. A single unlived precept weakens our spirit and gradually will make it go back from the right path to lead it on a path of darkness.**

**PROTECTING THE WORD**

**How is the Word of Christ Jesus protected? First of all by keeping it in the heart, just as the Virgin Mary kept it. Then it is guarded by lending it every obedience, in all its commands and prescriptions. Without custody and without obedience the Word disappears from the heart.**

**Thirdly, the Word is preserved by announcing it as the Word of eternal life to every man. It is the announcement, the memory of it to every man that certifies that the Word is alive in us and it is also well guarded. When there is no announcement, there is no obedience and there is no custody.**

**Another way to keep the Word is daily attendance with it. Reading the Gospel, meditating on it, deepening its knowledge, digging into it as one digs for treasures in order to let the purest truth flow from it, this too is a sublime way of guarding the Word.**

**Here is the teaching of the Book of Proverbs: “My son, if you will accept my words and keep my precepts in you, straining your ear to wisdom, inclining your heart to prudence, if in fact you will invoke intelligence and address your voice to prudence.**

**If you search for it like silver and to get it you will dig as for treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and you will find the knowledge of God, because the Lord gives wisdom, science and prudence come out of his mouth. He reserves success for the righteous.**

**He is a shield to those who act rectitude, watching over the paths of justice and protecting the ways of its faithful. Then you will understand equity and justice, righteousness and all the ways of good, because wisdom will enter your heart and science will delight your soul.**

**Reflection will guard you and prudence will watch over you, to save you from the path of evil, from the man who speaks of perverse intentions, from those who abandon the right paths to walk in the ways of darkness, who enjoy doing evil and rejoice of their perverse purposes,**

**whose paths are winding and whose roads are distorted; (Pr 2,1-15). You must never lose contact with the Word. Perfect ways to keep the Word are Catechesis and confrontation with the Spiritual Father. Whoever is far from Catechesis, will always make his own word, which will never be the Word.**

**The risk of this happening is not far from us. It is the truth. Those who abandon Catechesis will always abandon custody of the Word. Having abandoned the custody of the Word, the mission which is vitally linked to the Word will necessarily be abandoned.**

**THE HEART ILLUMINATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**Must the Word be reminded with a heart illuminated by the Holy Spirit? But when is the heart illuminated by the Spirit of the Lord? When the Christian dwells in the heart of Jesus, in which the heart of the Father dwells. The heart of the Christian in the heart of Christ, the heart of Christ in the heart of the Father.**

**When is the Christian's heart in the heart of Christ? When it is in the heart of the Word with an obedience in everything similar to the obedience of Jesus the Lord. If you are not in the Word with your heart, you are not even with your mind in it. Without mind and without heart, the mouth will speak from its fullness.**

**To speak of the Word of Christ one must acquire the nature of Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit. Since the Christic nature is not acquired in a day, one must always strive to acquire it. Mortal sin abruptly interrupts the acquisition, venial sin slows it down.**

**Whoever wants to acquire a Christic nature must commit himself with all his strength to always live in the Law of the Lord. He must never transgress one of its commandments. He must also abandon any defect, even in slight matters. He must accomplish everything from the will of Christ Jesus.**

**If one remains in the will of Christ, manifested in his Word, little by little he acquires the nature of Christ, the natural man transforms himself into a spiritual man and also the word of the announcement will come out of his heart which is all illuminated by Holy Spirit. Everything is from the new nature.**

**TRUE LIGHT FROM THE CROSS**

**Whoever contemplates the Crucifix with the eyes of the Holy Spirit, will receive for his mind and heart a very pure light capable of guiding him on the paths of life, in full obedience to the will of the Father. The Crucifix radiates light more than the sun by day and the moon by night.**

**More than the face of Moses as soon as he came down from the mountain. More than any other lamp, even the brightest. Nothing compares to the light that comes to us from the contemplation of the crucifix. St. Paul urged the Philippians to shape their lives on Christ Jesus Crucified.**

**The Letter to the Hebrews also exhorts to keep our gaze on Christ Crucified. From the vision with the eyes of the Spirit a new light will always come upon us. In his light we will see the light, we will walk from light to light until reaching eternal light. The eyes must never be turned away from him.**

**WALKING WITH HEAVEN FOR HEAVEN**

**When do you walk with Heaven for Heaven? When you walk in the love of God the Father, in the grace of Christ Jesus, in the Communion of the Holy Spirit, preserved in the Gospel by the Virgin Mary. Walking with Heaven is an obligation for those who want to walk for Heaven.**

**Instead, we walk for Heaven when we live the mission of salvation that has been embraced, filling the Father's house, forming the Body of Christ with the addition of new members, inviting every man to conversion and faith in the Gospel. We walk with heaven, we give heaven.**

**WALKING WITH ANGELS AND SAINTS**

**We know that the Angels are always ready to listen to the Lord and do his will. If we arrange our hearts to listen to Christ Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, to do all his will, we walk with the Angels. Having been separated from the will of Christ, there is no joutney with them.**

**Instead, the Saints are those who offered life to the Lord as a sacrifice for the salvation of many hearts. If we offer our life to Christ Jesus for the mission of salvation, then we walk with the Saints. Without the offer of our life, we walk alone.**

**BRIEF FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**