

"I pray to you, Truth over Love"

The catechesis of the Apostolic Movement in Bologna for the year 2017/2018

Learning love from love. This is the idea that lies at the bottom of "I pray to you, Truth over Love", the path of catechesis that the Apostolic Movement offers this year in Bologna.

Man is created in the image and likeness of God, that is Love, and all the great themes of faith are connected with love. The realization of man's vocation, the search for the meaning of his existence and his salvation are linked to Love. For this very reason, love needs to receive light from Love; because it is just looking at Christ, the Image of the Father made flesh, his Word and Truth, that man understands the truth of love in its highest and perfect measure, including his own mystery.

This need for truth about love - expressed by the title of the path, which borrows for a moment the voice of the poet of the last century, Wystan Hugh Auden - is the need of the truth of the Gospel and it is particularly intense in our time, marked by strong inflation in the use of the term and often by a great confusion around it. There is no person that does not notice the importance of love in his own life, yet meanings which are his denial and therefore denial of the dignity of the person are

often given to love. This itinerary is born of the deep certainty of faith that the Lord Jesus, the incarnation and revelation of the truth of God and man, is the truth of love. His Word is the way of Love.

The choice of this theme is also linked to two contextual reasons. The first relates to the specific context in which the meetings are proposed, the city of Bologna, a university city, populated by young people from all over the world. Young people are very sensitive to the theme of love. Although bombarded by a culture that often pushes them to interpret love in an ephemeral, superficial, materialistic and degrading way, they are carriers of great questions, in need of sense and animated by an inner turmoil that are essentially a need for truth and of Christ's love.

Then, dilating the look at the universal ecclesial context, the encounters proposed by the Apostolic Movement in Bologna want to be a tool to accompany young people on the path undertaken by the whole Church in the direction of the next Synod of Bishops (October 2018), which will be dedicated to vocational discernment, in faith, by young people. Through this important assembly, "the Church has decided to question herself on how to accompany young people to recognize and accept the call to love and life in fullness" (Preparatory Document, Introduction). Therefore, a path on love in the light of faith seemed a suitable way to serve the vocational discernment of young people, while helping them to become inserted in a more and more conscious and convinced way in the life and mission of the Church.



Five were foolish and five wise

Wisdom says the perfect relationship that must always reign between the end to be reached and the way to go through. On the contrary, foolishness is the fracture between the end and the way. Since the goal to be reached is everything for man, he loses the end and he loses his life. It is wise that in everything he thinks, does and designs, he always wonders: what is the purpose for which this thing must be done. From the end it is also revealed if the thing is well done, done badly, needs to be improved, changed, modified and adjusted somewhat. Since every secondary end is oriented to the primary, essential and ultimate end, from the ultimate end, every other end receives its truth.

Since the ultimate goal of man is the enjoyment of eternal bliss in heaven, after death, being time the path to run through to be able to reach it, it is wise that in everything he does he always does it in sight of this end. But how must everything be done so that this goal is achieved? Jesus tells it clearly: by observing his Word, putting his Gospel into practice. His well-observed Word and Gospel lead to eternal bliss. You do not observe the Gospel, you do not live according to His Word, He will never recognize us as His disciples, He will never open us the door to his home.

The lamp is needed to illuminate the way to the groom that is about to arrive. It is not needed to be brought in hand as an inert object. If it must illuminate, it must be full of oil. The foolish virgins take the lamp, but they do not take the oil. Without oil the lamp

does not illuminate. They cannot be admitted in the royal courtship. They'll have to get some oil. Meanwhile the groom arrives, enters the banquet hall and the doors are closed. Every access is barred. They are foolish because they live without thinking of the end of their lives or their mission. Since eternal one is the only end that gives truth to every other thing, every other intermediate end is a means to reach the eternal end.

Why do I have me baptized and confirmed? Why do I receive the Eucharist? Why do I let myself be consecrated as a presbyter? Why do I approach the sacrament of penance? Why do I receive the anointing of the sick and why do I celebrate marriage? Having today many disciples of Jesus declared that the eternal end has been attained, all these intermediate ends are decayed. The Church, also an instrument or sacrament for the eternal end, decays, too. Folly and wisdom also fall. Today there is only room for that human cunning that seeks to make the earth as enjoyable as possible, forgetting that every added joy in our body is a delight taken away with cruelty to the brothers. But all this happens because there is no more an eternal end to be reached. Morality has become useless concerning the end.

Mother of Wisdom, help the disciples of Jesus to disavow the innumerable falsehoods on Christ and his Word. Without this disavowal, nothing has any reason for being any longer and every way for eternal perdition is wide open.

Monsignor Costantino Di Bruno

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Unity of intent and sincere collaboration in pastoral action

Reflections from the Speech of H.H. Francis to the clergy,
the consecrated persons and parish representatives (Cesena, 1.10.2017)

"Evangélization is more effective when it is implemented with unity of intent and with sincere collaboration between different ecclesial realities and among the various pastoral subjects, who find in the Bishop a sure point of reference and cohesion" (Speech).

The key word in the speech given by Pope Francis in the Cathedral of Cesena is "co-responsibility". It indicates a necessary attitude that cannot be missing in every faithful - whether it be priest, religious or secular - called in first person to put the hand on the plough to work zealously in the Lord's Vineyard.

In fact, the pastoral work is a choral work that needs all vocations, charismas and ministries, which the Holy Spirit has distributed with infinite wisdom in the one ecclesial body. Therefore, no one must feel empowered to delegate to others what is competing with him or her. The gift is personal, as responsibility is personal. Rather, it is necessary that each one takes care of the salvation of souls and works in perfect synergy with those whom the Lord put to his side, even when this requires patience, meekness and great humility.

Division, jealousy, envy, vainglory and fratricidal struggles to get first place on the pedestal of the world cannot belong to the Christian. In the Church "unity of intent and sincere collaboration" must be placed at the centre of every pastoral action.

Unity of intent means the harmony of the heart that beats in unison with the heart of Christ. Where there is separation and status seeking the heart must be healed by the grace or better tuned with the desires and thoughts of Christ. So also collaboration does not have to be a façade collaboration. It must be sincere, transparent cooperation, based on mutual love and esteem, in that vision of faith that sees the other as an ally and not as an enemy. Sincerity means the reception of the personal and the other's mystery in perfect obedience to Christ Jesus, the only Lord of the Church and of man's life. Where God's work is not recognized in the brother working in the Vineyard, there is only falsehood. One deceives himself and deceives others by building artificial relationships that do not generate salvation.

Finally, in order not to miss the blessing of God, it is necessary to keep the deep bond with the shepherds, priests and bishops. They are the link between Heaven and Earth and at the same time the guarantors of the ecclesiality of faith that, without their ministry, becomes sooner or later an arbitrary interpretation of the will of God.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, keep our unity of intent and give us the sincerity of the heart to be constructors and not destroyers of the Kingdom of God.

Father Lucio Bellantoni

The Lord's Day
XXXII Sunday
O.T. Year A

AMEN, I SAY TO YOU,
I DO NOT KNOW YOU

RESPLENDENT AND UNFADING IS WISDOM (Sap 6: 12-16)

Wisdom is light that descends more and more new on humanity from God so that it can not only return to the light it has lost with sin but can walk from light to light until the attainment of eternal life. Truth, light and wisdom, are not a thing, a reality, they are an Eternal Person. It is the Holy Spirit of God that must shine on humanity in an ever-greater and fuller and shining light. If we separate truth, light and wisdom from the Holy Spirit, we make a thing of them and everything is subject to deterioration and aging. While the Holy Spirit is eternal, he never grows old, never deteriorates and never fails. The Spirit, being the Eternal God, is revealed to man in his ever-present and ever-present eternity. Wisdom does not come from the earth. It must come to us from heaven, from God. It is always the Lord who must make it shine and man must always ask for it.

LIKE THE REST, WHO HAVE NO HOPE (1Ts 4: 13-18)

What is the difference between those who believe in Christ and who do not believe in Him? Who believes in Him knows true hope and will walk in history to his glorious resurrection that will be in Christ, with Christ and for Christ. But to resurrect tomorrow with Christ, one has to become one body and one life with Him today. Hope is not out of Christ, but in Christ. It is not just his gift, it is the gift of himself and of his life to us. If you remove Christ Jesus as the only source, spring, principle and foundation of true hope, all man's expectations are vain.

Knowing that we will be resurrected in Him and our glory will be eternal, all life on earth will have to be aimed at the attainment of this eternal glory. Thus, life becomes the means to reach the end. It is the tree from which the fruit of divine glory must mature. It's foolish to waste a whole life because it is lived not oriented towards the end.

LORD, LORD, OPEN THE DOOR FOR US! (Mt 25: 1-13)

This is the foolishness of man: consuming life on earth in the realization of ephemeral, vain and sinful ends, which lead to eternal death. This is because the Christian is no longer the witness of the truth of eternal life. Having also become foolish, he has dragged the world into his own foolishness. The Christian has become like Lucifer who in his ignorance proclaimed himself God and from his vanity he dragged with him into darkness a third of Angels. Every Christian who from light and wisdom passes into darkness and foolishness, carries with him a "third" of humanity to death. So great is the Christian's influence concerning the eternal salvation of man. Jesus puts us severely on guard. If we pass to stupidity, if we abandon the light, if we leave his Word, there will be no eternal salvation for us. We can even knock at the door of Heaven, but He will not open. We are all warned. His Word remains immutable forever. Many Christians can say that the door is open. It is a lie of darkness. It is a false prophecy.

by the theologian,
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