

ROME - Inauguration of catechesis of the Apostolic Movement

The first Sunday of Advent saw the Apostolic Movement of Rome engaged in the inauguration of catechesis. The auxiliary bishop H.E. Monsignor Giuseppe Marciante, who presided at the Eucharistic celebration at the parish of Saint Roman Martyr, addressed words of esteem and encouragement to the Apostolic Movement, underlining the great coherence existing between the proposed formation process and the indications that the Holy Father has given us through the *Evangelii Gaudium*.

In fact, the Pope maintains that evangelization is the answer to the missionary invitation of Jesus and that in his "go" the new challenges of the evangelizing mission of the Church are present that, if not committed into a missionary output, falls into the temptation of pastoral sloth. "The Apostolic Movement", continued Monsignor Marciante, "represents the reaction to the temptation of a Church asleep in a narcissistic withdrawal and in an apostolic debilitation". The profound meaning of its name "Movement", continued the Bishop, lies precisely in the desire of realizing an outgoing Church, awake and rehabilitated in her mission.

In rejoicing at the choice of the theme of catechesis, "Our Sons", once again in line with the theme dictated by Pope Francis on the occasion of the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome, Monsignor Marciante has indicated to

us four points of verification drawn from Encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*:

- The primacy of the Word of God: Sacred Scripture is the source of evangelization and it is therefore necessary to continually train ourselves to listen to the Word and indispensable for it to become ever more the heart of every ecclesial activity.

- The fundamental role of the proclamation: the Holy Father summarizes it as the first and principal announcement to be given: "Jesus Christ loves you, has given His life to save you and now he is alive by your side every day to enlighten you, to strengthen and to free you".

- Mixed initiation: the catechetical meeting is an announcement of the Word but it always needs an adequate setting and an attractive motivation, the use of symbols, the insertion in growth processes and the integration of all the spheres of the person in a journey of listening and answering.

- Catechesis is the art of accompaniment: the Church must initiate her members, priests, religious and laity in this art, so that they may all learn to take off their sandals before the sacred land of the other. This is all the more important when the recipients of the proclamation are families.

The success of the ceremony was possible thanks to the collaboration of the adhering members of the Apostolic Movement who took special care of the liturgical animation, the offertory procession and the liturgy of the Word, placing each one his own particular talent at disposal in a spirit of full communion.

Let us pray to the Virgin Mary Mother of the Redemption to accompany our mission and enable us to realize the exhortation addressed to us all by Msgr. Marciante: carrying out the task of those who are vigilant in waiting through the evangelizing mission, thus coming to the point of gathering the generous fruits of the Gospel. **(The Apostolic Movement of Rome)**

He will be holy and will be called the Son of God

The Christian today is poor. Being poor, the whole world is in suffering. He lacks true richness, true hope and true life. He is drowning in false riches, false hopes and false lives. Why has the Christian become so poor as to make the whole world miserable? Because he has undressed himself of the truth of his Master and Lord. He lost the true light of his Redeemer. He wore the false expectations of the world and placed himself at their service.

The Christian has only one service to give to the world: enriching it with the gift of Christ the Lord. But not with the gift of a false Jesus, without pure light, devoid of any truth, deficient of all hope, deprived of his divine essence and stripped of the mystery of eternal life, which He alone can give to every man. There is no greater sin. Yesterday the Christian lost faith in his Christ. He misplaced his truth and went out of his grace. Christ Jesus keeps intact his eternal, divine and human truth. He maintained his mission of one and only Saviour and Redeemer of the world. The true Christ always remained the true Christ and for his defence councils and synods of all kinds were convened.

Today the truth of Christ is disappearing from the Christian's mind and nobody cares about it anymore. The gaze is directed only towards man. If God has come to man by becoming man, can man go to man if he fails to make himself the true body of Christ, the true instrument of his love and his light? Underselling Christ to the world is of no

use. Judah sold Christ to the chief priests. But it did not help him. He did not enjoy the thirty coins. He threw them into the temple before those who had offered them to him. But he could not even enjoy his life anymore. He hanged himself in despair. He had betrayed innocent blood.

The disciple of Jesus is asked to imitate the Virgin of Nazareth. The Lord asks her for her life and she gives it to him. Jesus asks the body to the Christian. By asking for the body, he also asks for the soul and the spirit. If his disciple gives him this gift, he will be able to live in it and from it and for it accomplish the redemption of humanity. If he refuses to give himself as a gift to his Lord, he is not saved and not even the world. The Christian is saved only by making himself a gift to Christ so that Christ saves the world. Until the advent of the new heavens and the new earth, the Lord will always knock at the disciple's heart, asking him for his body as a gift. From his answer depends the salvation or the loss of himself and of the world.

If Christ today does not become life in the disciple in all the power of his truth and grace, no salvation will be realized on our earth. Today, his disciple must give the body to Christ and the grotto of Bethlehem as well as the Golgotha is the heart of the Christian. He is the life of Jesus on our earth. Mother of God, Hallowed and Blessed Virgin, ensure that every Christian imitates you and declares himself, like you, true and only servant of Christ Jesus.

Father Costantino Di Bruno

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ACCEPTING THAT DEATH HAPPENS IS NOT THE SAME AS PROCURING IT

*Reflections starting from the Message of H.H. Francis
at the "World Medical Association" Meeting on the issues of "end-life"
(Rome, 16-17.11.2017)*

In the Greeting message on the occasion of the study days organized together with the Pontifical Academy for Life, the Holy Father Francis reiterated the traditional teaching of the Church on the theme of "end-life", highlighting the two extremes to be avoided according to the consolidated ecclesial magisterium: euthanasia and "therapeutic obstinacy".

Starting from a pronouncement by Pius XII of 1957 addressed to anaesthetists and reanimators, and recalling various magisterial pronouncements, the Pope reiterates how therapeutic interventions on the human person in serious and irreversible health conditions are to be evaluated, according to ethical of and not technological efficiency criteria. Regarding the "therapeutic obstinacy", the Pope observes that it is quite different from the practice of euthanasia: "It is a choice that responsibly assumes the limit of the mortal human condition, when it takes note of not being able to fight it anymore. "We do not want to procure death this way: we accept not being able to prevent it", as the Catechism of the Catholic Church specifies (No. 2278). This difference in perspective restores humanity to the accompaniment of dying, without opening justifications for the suppression of life. In fact, we clearly see, that not activating disproportionate means or suspending its use, is equivalent to avoiding the therapeutic obstinacy, that is carrying out an action that has an ethical meaning completely different from euthanasia, which remains always illicit, as it proposes to interrupt life, bringing about

death" (Message).

St. John Paul II had clearly laid out this necessary distinction in his Encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (March 25, 1995): "For a correct moral judgment on euthanasia, we must first of all clearly define it. By euthanasia in the true sense it is to be understood an action or an omission which by its nature and in its intentions causes death, in order to eliminate all pain" (§ 65). And he added: "From it we must distinguish the decision to renounce to the so-called "therapeutic obstinacy", that is to some medical interventions no longer adequate to the actual situation of the patient, because they are by now disproportionate to the results that could be hoped for or because they are too burdensome for him and for his family. In these situations, when death is expected to be imminent and inevitable, one can conscientiously "renounce to treatments that would only provide a precarious and painful prolongation of life, without however interrupting the normal cures due to the patient in such cases". [...] The renunciation of extraordinary or disproportionate means is not equivalent to suicide or euthanasia; rather it expresses the acceptance of the human condition in the face of death" (Ibidem).

Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, teach humanity through your faithful children how to sanctify suffering, you who have assisted Christ in the moment of his bloody death for us. May the Angels and Saints intercede so that nothing is spoiled of this precious blood.

Father Rosario Carrabetta

The Lord's Day

4th Sunday of Advent
Year B

OF HIS KINGDOM THERE WILL BE NO END

YOUR THRONE SHALL STAND FIRM FOREVER (2Sam 7.1-5.8b-12.14a.16)

There is an immense difference between the acting of God of yesterday and that of the disciples of Jesus of today. Yesterday God, for the whole span of the Old Testament, added truth to the truth about the mystery of salvation that he would have worked in the descent of Abraham. He promises David a son with the eternal kingdom. This Son is Christ Jesus. Today, the Christian proceeds through an opposite and contrary way; instead of growing from truth to truth in the most perfect knowledge of his Saviour and Lord, he takes away truth from truth, light from light, grace from grace and life from life. Since the truth of the Christian is Christ Jesus, deprived Christ of his truth, even the Christian today is without truth and the Church is without her truth. What is the use of the Church if Christ Jesus is no longer the only Saviour and the only Redeemer of the human race for her? What is her usefulness in the world, if she no longer is the sacrament of the grace and truth of all salvation and redemption?

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

(Rom 16: 25-27)

Saint Paul knows who Christ Jesus is. He knows that only for him the salvation of the world is and only for him there is redemption. Not only for him, but also in him and with him. Jesus is not a tree that has produced its fruit and now everyone can grasp it and eat it as he pleases. Jesus is both the tree and the fruit and whoever wants to taste its fruit must become one with him, always dwelling in him. Being he also the only Mediator or point of contact between the Father and every man, who wants to have access to the heart of

God, must necessarily be in the heart of Christ. The heart of Christ is the only vehicle that brings God to man and man to God, but not descend from it, but always remains in it. It is in the heart of Christ that the Father lives and it is in the heart of Christ that the Christian must live. In the heart of Christ, the Father and the Christian meet, dialogue and put themselves in perfect communion. The Father must be thanked from the heart of Christ.

HE WILL BE GREAT AND WILL BE CALLED SON OF THE MOST HIGH (Lk 1: 26-38)

Christological poverty is ecclesiological poverty. Ecclesiological poverty is anthropological poverty. Anthropological poverty is theological poverty. Theological poverty is eschatological poverty. Today the Christian expresses all these manifold poverty, because he has separated not only from the truth of Christ, but also from the mission of the Lord. He made himself a Christ of his own, which also implies a Church of his own, together with a theology and an eschatology of his own. Instead, if we enter the house of Nazareth, we discover that Christ Jesus is given in every detail to the Virgin Mary. This means that the Church must always ask the Holy Spirit to give her the true Christ, announce him to her, reveal him to her and lets him be born in her heart. The Church must always ask the Holy Spirit to grant her every strength and every light so that she too, like the Virgin Mary, can declare herself today and always the servant of her Lord. The Church lives of this perennial proclamation of the Holy Spirit, but also of the perennial gift of herself to Christ. Christ saves for this gift.

by the theologian,

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