

Thoughts about Gaudete et exsultate Call to holiness addressed to all

When Pope Francis published his third Apostolic Exhortation, "Gaudete et exsultate", I was immediately fascinated by the topic, which, as it is said in the subtitle, consists in the "call to holiness in the contemporary world".

Then I started reading it, captured by the simple and direct language of the Pontiff that reaches the heart and gives you courage and strength. The text is not a treatise on holiness, but aims at embodying in the current context the call to fully realize the personal humanity.

It is a journey that starts from the "call to holiness" addressed to all; from here we move on to the identification of "two enemies" that tend to resolve holiness in elitist and voluntary forms, passing through the evangelical beatitudes as a model of life. Thus, the Pope describes some characteristics of holiness: patience and meekness, humour, audacity and fervour, community life and constant prayer. And he does it so by talking about small gestures, which give flavour to life. As an example, I am quoting a passage that struck me in particular: "A lady goes to the market to do the shopping; she meets a neighbour and starts talking, and criticism follows. But this woman says inside herself: "No, I will not speak ill of anyone"». The Pope says, this is a step

towards holiness. "Then, at home, her son asks her to talk about his fantasies, and even though she's tired, she sits next to him and listens with patience and affection."

One aspect that gave me comfort was that on holiness in community life, that is, the intention of growing together in a group whose members take care of each other and constitute an open and evangelizing space. This exhortation brings me back to my experience as a parish member, in which I found a second family, a support and a concrete help. And to the experience of living a spirituality, which, for me, was that of the Apostolic Movement, in which I grew up with the principle that "the stronger supports the weaker". The sense of humour, then! A characteristic of the man of God ... I have met genuine people, Christians with joy in their faces and hearts, who know how to console and give you that smile that puts you back into the world. These people have been a force of attraction for me to the Church and to Christ.

And finally, the call to prayer, to rediscover the supernatural dimension of life, which

sometimes overwhelms us in the vortex of anxiety for worldly things. While the personal relationship with the Lord is a purer breath of life, which gives meaning and order to all the rest.

The Pope often speaks of this personal attendance with Jesus, he says to contemplate the crucifix, to approach the sacraments, to let oneself be looked at by Him, and in that gaze, to perceive to be loved; and he concludes with the wish that by going down this road "we will share a happiness that the world cannot take away from us».

Gabriella Benincasa

He will not be forgiven forever

Let us read Jesus' words with great attention: "Truly I say to you, all will be forgiven of the sons of men, sins and even all the blasphemies they will say; but whoever has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven forever: he is guilty of eternal guilt". The evangelical context will be a precious help for us to be able to understand these words, just as they are in the heart of the Father, from which they have been drawn and given to us. The salvation of humanity has been placed by God the Father in some eternal laws that must necessarily be observed. Not just on the supernatural level. Nature also has laws that cannot be transgressed, with the pain of the death of those who break them; a death that does not concern only who violates what the Lord has established, but also many others who are involved in transgression and disobedience.

The Father has revealed that if some laws are transgressed, one can re-enter them, in repentance, in conversion and in the request for forgiveness. These laws in which one can return, provided the conditions are observed, are the Commandments. The law that must not be violated, transgressed, is that which concerns the source, the spring through which salvation is given. The Father has established that the one and only source of salvation, redemption and eternal life is his Only Son, his Word made flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He is his eternal sacrament of salvation. If this source is not believed, there is the possibility of accepting it until the moment of our death. With death the time of conversion and the request for forgiveness end. You

enter eternity. Who dies in the rejection of Christ, in the non-acceptance of his salvation, cannot be saved. He rejected the source of eternal life. A thirsty man cannot survive in a desert if he does not approach the source, the well of water that gives life. Jesus is the only well given by God to humanity.

But there are also sins against the Holy Spirit and they are all those aimed at destroying the very source of salvation. They do not destroy it only for themselves, but for the whole world, depriving every man of the source of life, truth, light, perfect justice and redemption. Jesus frees from the devil. To remove people from their salvation, Pharisees and scribes say that He is a demon-possessed and that drives out demons because the prince of demons has granted him his power. If one personally does not believe, he might always be converted and enter into true salvation. But if he destroys the source of salvation for himself and for others, he is guilty of eternal death. Not only. He is also responsible for the eternity of every other person who is lost because he has destroyed the source of eternal life. This is the gravity of sin against the Holy Spirit: the voluntary and conscious destruction of the well of life. We leave the whole world to die of thirst because we do not want to welcome this eternal law that only Christ Jesus can quench our thirst in our burning desert. Mother of God, do not allow us get stained with such a grave sin.

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CALLED TO JOY

Reflections starting from the 3rd chapter of the Apostolic Exhortation "Gaudete et Exsultate" of H.H. Francis

"The word "happy" or "blessed" becomes synonymous with "holy", because it expresses that the person faithful to God and that lives his Word reaches, in the gift of himself, true beatitude" (GE 64). Today's society is dominated by the dictatorship of relativism and the single thinking and, consequently, the concept of happiness is commensurate with the model of the individual. In the collective imagination we often hear praise the good for me, the nice for me, truth for me, morality for me and happiness for me. The truthful and therefore indicative objectivity of the good life that makes man really man has failed. A biblically founded theological morality, which has the centre of gravity in the Gospel and in the Beatitudes the hermeneutical figure, is a morality of happiness and virtuous dispositions. The Gospel itself, which finds its compendium and perfect synthesis in the Beatitudes, is the good news of the Kingdom of God which opens itself up to man for the conquest of his freedom.

The new law (Discourse of the Mountain) is called the law of love and joy, because it makes us act in virtue of the caritas that the Holy Spirit infuses; the law of grace because, through faith and the sacraments, it confers the strength to act; the law of freedom, because it frees us from the ritual and juridical observances of the ancient Law and leads us to act spontaneously under the impulse of charity. Just as the moral life of every believer in Christ is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are permanent disposi-

tions that make man docile to follow the motions of the Spirit.

Christian freedom is the renunciation of being ego-centric and self-referential; it is the denial of one's own mind and one's heart; it is the annihilation of one's own will, not as a self-destructive end, but because God, in Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, brings to completion only his plan of love and salvation in our life. Christian freedom is freedom from oneself. One frees himself from himself to become Another. This Other, this Someone is Christ Jesus, of whom we have become the body in the waters of Baptism through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Our identity is Christ, our personality is Christ; if we achieve perfect freedom from ourselves so that all Christ lives, dies and rises in us, we have fulfilled the mystery of our being. The power of grace makes man "good" by grafting him into a life of holiness. This call is an initiative of grace on the one hand, and on the other of the vocational and operative fidelity of freedom which is moral goodness and good life: a life of communion with God. The male / female saint are men and women that crossing the paths of the beatitudes have completed and matured the process of true humanity in conformity with the true Christ, the perfect and new man. A definite humanity is a happy humanity.

Mother of the Redemption help us to imitate you in your full and total gift to the Word of Your Son Jesus to be blessed like you.

Father Nicola De Luca

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

HE IS POSSESSED BY BEELZEBUL
(X Sunday O.T. Year B)

I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN YOU AND THE WOMAN (Gen 3,9-15)

Eve, tempted with deception by the serpent, fell into the sin of disobedience. She did not observe the Lord's command. She tempts Adam and makes him fall into the same sin of disobedience. It is death. It is as if a dismemberment, a laceration and a fragmentation had taken place in their lives. Every part of this laceration lives for itself, but it also lives having lost its natural and supernatural end. This fragmentation will reach its peak with physical death and if you do not re-enter into unity, which only God can create, you will end in eternal death. The Lord God intervenes immediately and announces his will to bring man back into his unity. He says this will of his with mysterious words: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your lineage and his lineage. This will crush your head and you will harass her heel". This promise of the Lord will be fulfilled fully in Christ the Lord.

WE HAVE AN ETERNAL DWELLING FROM GOD (2Co 4,13-5,1)

With death, which is separation of the body from the soul, the body decomposes, returns to dust, according to the Lord's words spoken to Adam on the day of his disobedience. But God has promised that one day for those who believe in his Word there will be the resurrection for eternal life. Jesus confirms the Word of his Father. The resurrection will be for eternal life for those who have believed in his Word and have made it become the law of life. It will instead be of eternal ignominy for those who have lived with injustice and iniquity,

because they have not believed the Word. Saint Paul confirms to the Corinthians the truth of every Word of God and of Christ Jesus. Those who persevered in faith in Him, at the end of time, when the new heavens and the new earth will be created, the Lord will call them from the dust to give them an eternal dwelling in their glorious, immortal and spiritual body of light.

HOW CAN SATAN DRIVE OUT SATAN? (Mk 3: 20-35)

There is a sin of fragility and weakness, there is a sin of wickedness and malice, but there is also a devilish and satanic sin. While the other sins are the result of the transgression of the commandments and of every other Word that has come out of the mouth of God, the diabolical and satanic sin is the fruit of the destruction of the source of salvation, redemption and eternal life which is Lord Jesus. Yesterday this satanic sin aimed at destroying Christ in his divine and human truth and in his mission. Then it turned into the destruction of the Church, tearing and reducing her to a thousand pieces. In our times this sin is all oriented, aimed at the cancellation of all the truth that the Holy Spirit has placed in Holy Scripture. Christ, Church, Word and Truth in every form and content must be destroyed. Nothing will have to remain of them. With Jesus Pharisees and scribes work satanically to declare him Satan, so no one would have believed in him. Since today the source of truth is the Word read and understood in the Holy Spirit, it is the Spirit that must be destroyed.

by the theologian

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