# BRIEF PORTRAIT ABOUT THE PURIFICATION OF THE HEART AND OF THE MIND

# THE TRUE CHRIST WAS COMING TO THE WORLD

## Examination of conscience for the Holy Christmas 2023

**Examination of conscience for all the faithful in Christ:**

**Presbyters and Laypeople**

The Holy Christmas is the Gift of Christ Jesus to every man: to those who already believe in Him and to those who do not; to those who already love Him and to those who loved Him before and no longer love Him now; to those who want to love Him, but do not know how to love Him; to those who have lost the faith in Him and every day that goes by feel discouraged and disappointed by all that they see and hear among the Christians, interested in having no other purpose in life, but that of eliminating Christ Jesus from the mystery of our most holy life.

In order to give the true Christ to ourselves and to this disappointed, tired, laboured, confused, strayed, it is a righteous thing for us, presbyters, laypeople to question ourselves.

Today, do we manifest the true Christ to each of our brother of faith, non-faith, disappointed by faith, willing to believe again?

Do we manifest Him to each of our brother tired of our rituality celebrated to flaunt the appearance, but without the purity of truth and the fullness of love, while truth and love are the only two things necessary to manifest or to highlight in every ritual that we celebrate and we participate in?

Here are the questions which one urges to give immediate response, if we want Christ Jesus to be the heart of our life, to be the only Gift to give to brothers, the only Love to manifest and reveal, the only Light that must shine from our face, the only Word that every other heart must hear, the only Song to chant not with our mouth, but with our entire life that becomes celebration of our Magnificat in thanksgiving and blessing of our God and Lord.

As a presbyter, do I manifest Christ and offer Him to the hearts in the noblest and worthiest way?

As a faithful layperson, do I reveal with my word and my deeds that everything that I say and do is the fruit of my faith, of my hope, of my charity?

Why, do I, presbyter, need the gift of Christ from every faithful layperson?

Why do I, faithful layperson, need the gift of Christ from the presbyter?

Why is my Christ of presbyter poor without the gift of Christ that I necessarily receive from the faithful layperson?

Why is my Christ of faithful layperson poor without the gift of Christ that I necessarily receive from the faithful layperson?

The answer to these questions will certainly help us to celebrate according to truth, righteousness, perfect charity, pure and sincere love, justice and full exemplarity in every virtue, the mystery of the gift of Christ, that must be perfect life in us to be perfect life in each of our brother.

Here is the ministry of the presbyter: first, he is called to give Christ in the celebration of the Sacraments of salvation.

In every sacrament he celebrates he must always put all attention so that all the ceremonies and all the rituals be intended for the gift of Christ to those who participate to the holy liturgy. Rituals and ceremonies are always aimed at the Gift of Christ to those who are present. He must never forget that the liturgy does not exist in itself. The liturgy for the community exists.

Sacrificing the community to the liturgy is a most serious offence that one causes to the Lord our God. The people who participate to the liturgy is Christ in his body. The priest who presides is Christ as chief and shepherd.

Now, Christ chief and shepherd cannot tire the Christ body, he cannot lead the Christ body to depart or not to participate to the Sacraments in which he nourishes himself because Christ chief celebrates a liturgy for itself.

He must always remember that the liturgy is celebrated to make Christ body fall in love with the true Christ. Instead, if he celebrates the liturgy for itself, he might never manifest the beauty of Christ through the sacred celebrations and people will depart.

Even when he celebrates the homily, he must always remember that He is Christ chief and shepherd who speaks to Christ body, Christ body who only needs not only to listen to the Word of Christ, but also to hear the voice of Christ Shepherd who speaks with loveliness, with firmness of truth, with perfect doctrine, always not with the purpose of attesting the truth in itself though, but with the purpose of making Christ body fall in love with the true Christ, of Christ according to the purity of truth of the Gift given by the Father to us.

Even in every extra-sacramental relation, from the simplest to the most complex, from the smallest to the greatest, before every person, Christ chief and shepherd must always remember that his is a relation of the Spirit of the Lord who is in Him and who speaks not to one heart, but who speaks to the Holy Spirit who is in that heart, instead, Holy Spirit who is waiting to be awakened, made living, made true, made holy, comforted, nourished by the Spirit who is in Christ chief and in Christ who is in the Shepherd.

In every extra-sacramental relation, there is no abstract truth to defend, there is no abstract Gospel to be proclaimed, there is no abstract word to resonate. Instead, there is the voice of the Holy Spirit who must speak to the Holy Spirit that is in the heart of the other person.

Sometimes the Spirit who is in the other person has been buried in the heart for fifty, sixty years: the Spirit of the Shepherd must rise him, as Jesus has risen the Spirit who was buried in the heart of the Woman from Samaria and who was waiting to be brought to life again.

Other times the Holy Spirit of the other person is only Spirit of curiosity like the Holy Spirit who was in Zacchaeus and the Spirit of the Shepherd must turn him into Spirit who finds the fullness of truth in a true and sincere conversion.

Some other times, the Holy Spirit of Christ body speaks to the Spirit of Christ chief and manifests his needs necessary to be able to live as true Spirit of the body of Christ Jesus and these needs must not be considered by the spirit of the flesh of Christ chief, but must be considered by the Holy Spirit, the only Spirit who must discern and consider all the needs manifested by the Spirit of Christ body.

Here is why the spirit of flesh might never dwell in Christ body, but only and always the Holy Spirit of Christ Jesus.

A solution taken by the spirit of flesh might have the hearts departed from the Body of Christ that is the community of the disciples of the Lord and made one’s own community and one’s personal Church.

The Spirit of Christ chief must put utmost attention so that this may never happen. It will never happen, if the Holy Spirit of Christ Jesus lives, speaks and works in Him.

Here are now what questions Christ body must always ask himself so that he may be true body of Christ and, in perfect hierarchical communion, cooperate with the Christ body to the well-ordered edification, perfect in truth and in holiness, of the parish community, in which the entire universal Church lives:

Do I want to grow as true body of Christ Jesus?

Do I progress in my growth or is mine stillness that verges on sloth, if not even the sin against the Holy Spirit?

Am I docile, meek, humble of heart in the obedience to the truth according to the Gospel of Jesu the Lord?

Do I listen, in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit who speaks through each of my brother of faith and also of non-faith?

Do I let myself be corrected, having at heart only the perfect formation of the true Christ in my life?

Do I know what my vocation, my mission, my role, my spiritual virtue is, what the Holy Spirit wants from me today?

Do I live my spiritual gift according to the Law of charity that the Holy Spirit has given to us through the mouth of the Apostle Paul?

Do I always speak with words dictated by the Spirit of the Lord, or is my flesh, my vices, my sin that speak in me and pronounce words and prophecies of sin that are falsity and lie?

Do I respect, with profound humbleness, the role, the mission, the ministry, the spiritual gift of every member of my community?

Can I unclothe myself of the wicked spirit of jealousy, of envy, of pride, of arrogance, from every instinct that drags me into a work of destruction of the community, instead of working for the edification and of elevation of the parish community that is the body of Christ Jesus?

Does Christ who lives in me help Christ who lives in my brothers become more and more true and perfect?

Is the Holy Spirit who lives in me of support to the Holy Spirit who lives in every brother of my community?

Is mine true, perfect exemplarity that shows the beauty of Christ Jesus to the hearts?

Do I know how to avoid the littlest offence both with foolish words and with deeds not holily considered and chosen so that the faith of my brothers may not suffer any damage?

How much to I commit myself to be body of Christ according to the heart of Christ?

But first of all: do I always think of myself as a body of Christ?

Do I always act, speak, think, work, relate to every brother of the parish community as true body of Christ?

Do I criticise and murmur when things do not coincide with my thought and my ideas?

How much do I listen to the Shepherd that God has given me so that the Spirit may lead me to the entire truth?

Am I separate from Christ Body because of ideologies, philosophies, education alternative to the Gospel and to the sound doctrine of the Church?

How much am I willing to a wise and intelligent obedience in the Holy Spirit for a command that is given to me?

If we answer these questions with truth and sincerity, before God and our conscience and we truly grow with lively desire in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, we can truly, really, pastorally celebrate a Holy Christmas according to the heart of our heavenly Father.

To put our conscience into truth and begin working as true body of Christ, we can also celebrate a penitential liturgy in the Advent, not a superficial penitential liturgy, celebration for the celebration, liturgy for the liturgy, without the body of Christ, because He is absent in soul, in mind, in thoughts, in desires, in feelings.

It must be a liturgy aimed at uncovering our conscience, rather our life, before the Holy Spirit, asking Him, as King David asked it one day, to create in us a pure heart and restore a firm spirit in us.

We must ask the Holy Spirit of God to rise the Spirit of Christ in us, buried in the gorges of some fibre of our being since some years now.

Let us all ask, then, the Spirit of Christ to rise the Spirit of Christ dead and buried in our heart, or to enliven Him if He languishes in it and thus we may manifest the entire world how a parish ecclesial community live the Holy Christmas, in Christ and in the Spirit.

May this Holy Christmas that we are about to celebrate be the birth of the true Christ in our hearts, who is not our a-liturgic Christ, our a-theological Christ, our a-mystological Christ, our social Christ, our ecological Christ, our do-it-yourself Christ, our Christ of fantasy and of imagination.

Instead, He is the Christ of the Father, the Christ of the Holy Spirit, the Christ of the Virgin Mary, the Christ of the Gospel, the Christ of the Martyrs and of the Confessors of faith.

This Christ might be also ours, insofar we unclothe ourselves entirely of the false Christ worshipped and confessed, believed and preached.

May the Virgin Mary obtain for us this grace for this Holy Christmas 2023.

**APPENDIX**

***THE BURIED GRACE***

The soul lives, being enlightened with Truth and nourished with Grace. Grace makes it grow. Truth makes it proceed rapid on the way toward the kingdom. When Truth and Grace are no longer the nourishment of the Christian soul, deprived of its supernatural nurturing, it perishes, decays, dies. Then it urges to enter again into righteousness.

One is righteous before God when his Holy Spirit is let lived in us completely, totally, globally; when He becomes the Soul of our soul and the Spirit of our spirit, so that soul and spirit may develop all the supernatural potentialities of love the Lord has enriched us with, regenerating us. The obstacles to the mighty action of the Spirit of God are not only the capital vices and that concupiscence, or domain of the flesh, that departs the charity of God from the soul. There is the Christian who daily lives in death.

However, there is also the Christian who, while not reaching to such a destruction, does not manage to fulfil the path of holiness, though, for he does not want to begin to eradicate from his life that infinity of little flaw, those minor lacks that impede the grace its complete development and its perfect fructification. There is the grace given to God and that it is as if it were buried by this fine dust of daily venial transgressions. These are inappropriate thoughts, vain words, hastened judgements, summary condemnations, arbitrary sentences, easy confrontations, derogations and self-dispensations from responsibilities, disengagements, “innocent” sympathies and antipathies, inattention, imprudence of all kind, impatience, hastiness, non-respect of the others’ “ministeriality”, non-scrupulous observance of the sound and holy discretion, motion of pride, of envy and jealousy, worship of the self, various ambitions and desires, affections of the spirit, clinging to a past that does not give any salvation, fear of the news of God creative of goodness for every man, disappointment, discouragement, loss of hope, non-will of reading the signs of times, path in the ignorance of the truth of faith, non-full capacity of total inner freedom into truth, dependence from the others’ judgement or opinion, letting loose, living for today, waste of time, lack of care for one’s own constant growth in wisdom, indecision, unjustified postponements, unmotivated delays, weakness in accomplishing the good and other endless “minutia.”

The soul, from garden of good, sprinkled from grace, is turned into a sandy desert where every form of spiritual life becomes impossible. This daily veniality is the greatest impediment to holiness. For it, the soul is weakened little by little, until becoming incapable of resisting to that temptation that wants it to abandon the way of righteousness and be handed over to evil totally. There are some spiritual situations that are tranquil only in appearance; actually, they manifest the burial of grace in a multiplicity of imperfections in the observance of the Law of the New Covenant.

When grace does not grow, when it does not develop all its divine energy in the soul, when it is reduced to impotence, the spiritual state of the Christian enters a very critical phase, finds itself in a prelude of death. Temptation knows that, weakening the soul little by little, it loses its strength, it lacks discernment, it lets it go, abandons itself in the small “license”, and, finally, with calculate and inevitable appointment, as through natural movement, precipitates in death.

A lot of holiness is not produced because one does not want to break up with the venial sin, no longer considered by many people as the gate of the serious fault. The Saints are not different people from us. They have also experienced the weakness of the human frailness. However, they have overcome it, having decided in their heart that one needed to defeat that venial sin that we let live “in peace and tranquillity” in our heart.

The air that our soul breathes is indeed entirely contaminated by the venial sin. Hundreds, rather thousands are those that are committed. We are so used to live with them, that we do not even perceive them, we do not know them, we do not realize it. We commit them and that is all. However, what one realizes is our non-progression to the way of the kingdom.

It is our spiritual stasis and it is that daily life made of endless deeds of non-holiness that shows our regression from the way of the kingdom. We realise it: we know that we are not holy.

Mother of Redemption, Mother Entirely Holy, you who have known neither the shadow of one only venial sin, help us understand that one cannot live with it and think that one is doing the will of God. Persuade us that the Holy Spirit cannot act in us with fullness and with might because of it. Deliver us from the illusion that one can advance toward the kingdom with the veniality in our heart. Above all, open our mind so that we may believe that a lot of path is impeded by it co-dwelling in us.

Mother of God, You who have believed and are blessed for that, increase our faith, reinforce our charity, enhance our hope. We want to imitate You: like You, we do not want to know imperfection anymore. Give us this faith and this certitude: whoever wants to definitively break with the venial sin, under any form, in all its possible manifestation, on any level of thought, deed, word, omission, makes himself holy. Help us, o Mother, and we shall dig up the grace, we shall deliver it from the prison of our transgressions declared and thought as “insignificant” and it will enlighten the world with its beauty, with its glory, with its magnificence of holiness and of truth.

***THE IMPRISONED GRACE***

The love of God the Father, the grace of Christ Jesus and the communion of the Holy Spirit are together gift of conversion, of regeneration, of sanctification. The first grace, that of the conversion, is not given through sacramental way; it is offered through way of holiness. It is the holiness of the one who proclaims the Word, the means through which the Holy Spirit grants the conversion to the heart. Therefore, holiness is the vehicle through which the Spirit passes from the sanctified soul to the soul to regenerate.

The more one grows in truth and in holiness the person that bears the Spirit of God, the greater and the truer the action of the Spirit Himself will be in the person who receives Him as a Spirit of conversion and of listening of the word of faith. Now it happens that in the mindset of many people, truth and holiness are almost ignored, no longer considered, sometimes even denied as a way for the conversion of hearts. One presents himself to the world without holiness, one encounters it without truth. Truth without holiness does not reach the heart, holiness without truth reaches it, but does not enlighten it; it turns it, but it, lacking the necessary light, confusing good and evil, righteous and unrighteous, sacred and profane, performs a little good and a little evil, it turns itself into an unholy instrument for the bestowal of the Spirit of the Lord. Holiness without truth imprisons grace, it does not make it ripe; the heart without truth goes astray, for it is confused; holiness without truth creates a movement of conversion that does not ripe, though, not having been sowed in the soil of the Word.

Whoever falls from truth also falls from holiness; indeed, there is no holiness without truth, but neither truth that touches the hearts without the holiness of the one who bears the Word. Now the one who is without truth imprisons all the grace in his soul, the Holy Spirit is quenched, prophesies become like death, they no longer enlighten the hearts, no longer shake conscience. Having given less significance and importance to the Word and holiness, one has deprived the Christian of the Spirit of conversion and therefore of sanctification. One receives a lot of grace, but it does not fall on the good soil, it neither falls on the wicked one, for many people accepts it with simplicity and purity of intention, but this is not enough to make it ripe. Grace grows in the truth of God and the truth of God ripens in grace, grace and truth are indispensable for the conversion of the world and it, in its turn, is indispensable for the conversion.

Imprisoning grace is depriving the world of salvation, it means to leave it in its sin, it means to abandon it to its mystery of iniquity, of foolishness, of ignorance. When grace is imprisoned in the person, when it does not pass, then: either it has been received without the complete and total truth, or it has not sufficiently been accompanied by the personal work made of prayer and of obedience to God. Prayer and obedience are an indivisible binomen. One prays to obey; one obeys to grow in grace; one grows in grace to redeem the world. When the other does not receive the Spirit of conversion and of salvation, it is a sign that one has not obeyed God and therefore one has not prayed to obey, to ask the Father of heaven the strength for the fulfilment of his mission, for the observance of his precept of love with regard to one’s own mission and vocation.

Without the prayer for the obedience, though having received the grace and the conversion in abundance, though having drawn the supernatural gift of regeneration and of salvation, the grace of sanctification does not develop its fruits. The obedience to God is the principle of liberation of grace from our hearts, the prayer of obedience lets one be able to keep the gate of the heart always open so that grace, not only of conversion, but also of justification and of sanctification, that is poured forth into our hearts, may flow like a river, filling the hearts with righteousness and of holiness.

Then one needs the Christian to perfection himself in the virtue of obedience, in that most perfect listening of his Lord, so that he may practise every Word that has come out the mouth of God, knowing that temptation is always lurking so that the Word that saves be not lived, or be transformed, manhandled, cancelled in its integrity and globality of significance. A long and patient work awaits those who want to unleash grace; they must first untie the entire strength of the Word, the only capable to generate holiness in the hearts, for it has opened the minds to truth. Otherwise, man does not change, is not transformed, he remains in his existential lie and in his heart locked before every motion of the Spirit of God the Lord. One also seeks relations and ways of meeting with the heavenly Father, but to remain in two separate, distant worlds; God in the world of above and man in that of down here; the needs and the necessities of earth through earth remain the points of convergence, that one would draw from heaven.

Mother of God, your holiness has brought the Holy Spirit in the house of Elizabeth, your Word has poured Him forth into her heart, she became prophet, she acknowledged your mystery; but also John the Baptist, in the womb of his mother, was filled with Him, and immediately made prophet of the most high God since that moment. Obtain for us the grace of obedience, so that we may also live as true servants of God, like You, who were his faithful and obedient handmaid. The world needs it to be sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord.

***FROM GRACE THE TRUTH***

God loves man with an eternal love and he always meets him; He never ceases to show him the right way, the good path, manifesting truth and mistake, revealing the light and the darkness.

He works innerly, moving understanding and rationality, reinforcing the heart and conscience, so that they may read the truth in history, understand the good and the evil. As long as He acts directly, through immediate and also mediated way, through the particular prophetic mission, we are most certain that truth and error are separate with a sharp cut.

Instead, when one is before the ministerial prophecy, that is that deriving from the sacraments of the Baptism, the Confirmation and the Priesthood, being it indirect, it depends on the holiness of the person; there is the possibility of error, of confusion, of the non-sharp separation between the good and the evil, between the lawful and unlawful, between the metahistorical and historical, between what is faith and its incarnation.

With fear and trembling, the person is obliged to perennially walk in the grace of God, proceeding from perfection to perfection and from holiness to holiness. Christ Jesus, before being the Teacher of truth, was the one who lived the highest holiness and taught the truth for He daily exercised in grace. In Him, there was the growth in wisdom and grace, in the truth of his heart and in the holiness of his soul; the heart poured forth into the soul the strength of his light and the soul bestowed the heart with the energy of holiness and thus wisdom and grace brought his humanity to the highest perfection, gave the world an anthropological breakthrough; through his life, man has finally known and knows the clear distinction between the true and the false, between the good and the evil, between the righteous and the unrighteous, between what is of God and what belongs to man, instead.

With wisdom one knows the error, with grace one overcomes it; instead, when there is no growth in wisdom, one does not even know sin and the soul is covered with thousands of little and great transgression that impoverish it, weakens it, make it anaemic, and therefore incapable of being able to resist seduction. Evil, error, sin then become flesh, history, garment, natural form of life, lifestyle. When the soul falls into the abyss of the non-knowledge of sin, nothing might help it rise again from this abyss of darkness.

Settling it for oneself becomes impossible; the spirit is blind, the soul is dead, deprived of any desire of ascent. However, God, through his immense and great mercy, once again uses the extraordinary means of his grace, that are external, that come from Him directly. Saint Paul was helped by such an intense and shining light that made him blind; some are prompted by particular visions, by direct meeting with the Lord, finally other ones with the Prophecy of the Holy Spirit, not ordinary, but extraordinary, through which God shatters the slothful wall of the person, He pierces it and with his light and his strength bursts with the might of salvation, to heal the eyes of the spirit and to restore the soul so that it may take up again the path to a more and more clear knowledge of truth and a more and more perfect growth in the sanctifying grace.

Meeting God is not the purpose of a path, but the principle of a journey, that has specific rules to follow; if one only among these is left, the path is not fulfilled and man returns into the darkness of the past, he might even delude himself to proceed well, but his spiritual state is in the non-knowledge of sin, in the non-strength to overcome it. Thus, from sin to sin, man precipitates in an abyss of death, in a bottomless abyss from which is impossible to come to surface without a further grace of God, stronger and mightier than the first one, to begin the new path of life.

The error is possible and it always accompanies the non-holy Christian who does not desire and does not aspire to holiness. Grace is necessary to the knowledge of sin and of error and the science of error is necessary to holiness to grow and to be reinforced. The ability of discernment of the Christian must come to the separation between atom of truth and of error; we know that the Pharisees distinguished the flies from camels. They filtered the first, they swallowed the second. A lot of modern “holiness” does not even let that, being both the same thing for it; thus is the flesh consumed in sin, the spirit in error, the soul in non-love and non-charity.

One denounces sin overcoming it; the one who overcomes it knows it and he knows what damage it causes to the soul. The saints had horror of it; they knew it so well that they desired death instead of committing one only, both mortal and venial. However, the light to know the sin comes from the greatest grace in the soul. The world, that is with no grace, does not know it, does not overcome it, does not fear it, it lives and dies in it.

Mother of God, your always perfect holiness helped you accept the Word of God entirely in your heart; you kept it and meditated it so that also in your spirit and your understanding it might bear fruits of great adhesion and greater fulfilment. Mother if Wisdom, obtain for us the grace of imitating you in your holiness, so as to be able to follow you in your response and in the love for the Word you listened. We also want to begin the path into the knowledge of truth to always have the destructive force of sin and the catastrophes it works clear. Thus, walking from light to light and from grace to grace we shall reach you in the bright kingdom of our Heavenly Father.