

Catanzaro, the Archbishop's pastoral visit:

The Apostolic Movement moves along with other lay aggregations

The adhering members of the central Seat of Catanzaro-Squillace have rejoiced on Sunday, September 24 for the Pastoral Visit announced by the Metropolitan Archbishop Msgr. Vincenzo Bertolone. The decree of proclamation has been read in all parishes, sanctuaries and rectory churches. A celebratory event that will have its solemn beginning on January 28 in the "St John Baptist and Evangelist" parish in Catanzaro, in the presence of the clergy and lay faithful.

The theme that will accompany the pastoral visit to the 122 parishes of the diocese will be: "A happy Church with a mother's face", which will be deepened also in the popular mission that each parish will set before the Pastor's visit.

Every year the Archbishop visits the parishes on the occasion of celebrations and events, but the pastoral visit will give the Pastor the opportunity to spend several days in the community, reflecting on the very special visit with which the "Supreme Pastor", Jesus Christ, visited and redeemed his people and continues to visit us with the gift of his Spirit.

"I come with a paternal and motherly love," Archbishop Bertolone writes in the decree of proclamation, "to visit you in your

parish communities to thank the Lord with you, to support you in hope, to verify your journey and to deepen the knowledge of this beloved people so as to grow more and more in fidelity to the Lord, in fraternal love, in the exercise of mercy, in the witness of charity and in the announcement of the Kingdom of God. I will be with you to make the work of Christ the Good Shepherd more effective in this Church of Catanzaro-Squillace that "has become dear to me in the Lord", to be in His image Father, Master, and Shepherd."

Addressing a special thanks to the priests, principal collaborators of the Episcopal service, the consecrated persons and the lay faithful, for the often humble and hidden service, Archbishop Bertolone talks of an invitation to strengthen the sense of joyful opening to the mission and testimony, having a special attention for the lowly and those who do not feel part of the Church, "so that he can see in the parish an open door community, ready to welcome, accompany and integrate, capable of dialogue and fraternal commitment in the city of men".

The pastoral visit will allow Archbishop Bertolone, accompanied by some collaborators, to know more closely the parishes' educational and administrative activities, also verifying the state of conservation of churches and pastoral structures. The encounters that the Pastor will have with the lay faithful, with ecclesial participation bodies, with groups, associations, movements and institutional authorities, personally visiting the various realities present in the territory, will be valuable as well.

The Apostolic Movement, along with the other lay aggregations, will live this event of faith, praying for their Pastor and animating popular missions in parish communities.



My justice is near

The justice of the Lord is infinitely different than all others that exists on earth. In God, it is "most faithful obedience" to every Word He has spoken, proclaimed, prophesied and sworn. He ever adds and takes away nothing to what is given as a rule of obedience to man. Freeing the children of Jerusalem from the long, tough, heavy slavery of Babylon is the true righteousness of God. He promised it and every promise must be fulfilled by righteousness. Forgiving the sinner who repents and returns to the Law, in God is pure righteousness. He said it. For justice, he must forgive. Sending His Messiah, His Redeemer and Saviour onto the earth is righteousness. He announced the liberation of man since ancient times. Making the proclamation of salvation reach even the more remote islands, this also is a promise of the Lord and consequently his justice.

The Lord sees his people still in slavery. He announces it that his righteousness is near, that is, that liberation is about to be accomplished: "Indeed the Lord has mercy on Zion, he has mercy on all its ruins. Jubilee and joy will be in it, thanksgiving and singing melodies! Listen to me, O my people; O my nation, lend me your ear. For the law shall come forth from me and I will make my righteousness as the light of the peoples. My justice is near, my salvation will manifest; my arms will govern the peoples. Islands will hope me the, they will trust in my arm" (cf.

Is 51: 1-2). The children of Israel can rekindle their hope. Knowing that what the Lord says is always done, they can start preparing their luggage to return to their land.

This is the Christian's certainty. He knows that Jesus will always carry out what he said for perfect justice. A truth must never be forgotten. Jesus' righteousness is not only in one of his words, but it is in all the Word. Now the Word also says what the man has to do for justice, that is, for loyalty. In fact, God's righteousness is absolute in saying his Word. Instead, it is conditioned upon its fulfilment: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." Who must Jesus always fill with mercy for justice? He who is merciful. Who must he give the kingdom of heaven to? To whoever is poor in spirit? Who will be consoled? Whoever weeps remaining in the very pure truth of the Gospel. As justice for Jesus is full fidelity to the word given, so also for every one of his disciples, justice is full fidelity to the accepted Word. One welcomes the Word, he lives it and he is just. Accepted and lived the Word, Jesus is obliged to be faithful to what he has promised. Mother of God, you have been faithful to every Word of the Lord and He has covered you with eternal glory. Help also us to be faithful to the welcomed Word in order to be with you in the same glory

Father Costantino Di Bruno

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Taking the first step in the direction of forgiveness

Reflections from H.H. Francis' speech in the Liturgy
of Reconciliation (Colombia, September 8, 2017)

In the recent apostolic journey in Colombia, the Holy Father encouraged the majority of Christian Catholics to continue the dialogue of reconciliation undertaken between the various parties in conflict: "Seeing Christ so mutilated and wounded, interrogates us... broken and amputated Christ, for us it is even more Christ, for he shows us once again that he came to suffer for his people and with his people; and also to teach us that hatred does not have the last word, that love is stronger than death and violence." Crucified Christ is certainly the most effective sign to indicate to what extent God's Love can be driven to redeem a humanity condemned to perish because of its sin. For the sacrifice of the Crucified, death has forever been overcome, and the gift of peace, unity, reconciliation become the concrete and real offer of the merciful God to every man of goodwill who chooses to shape his life on the evangelical logic.

The realization of this conversion to new life begins with a real, true and concrete reconciliation between the victims of mischief, wickedness and abominations of all kinds and their respective executioners. With a prophetic voice, the pope reminds every baptized that restoring order and unity among the children of the same Father is an obligation, an indispensable condition for receiving forgiveness from God (Mt 6: 14-15) by granting and receiving reconciliation and thereby also restoring this way visible communion in the Body of Christ.

Francis gives the Crucifix as example because he recognizes that only by assuming the logic of the cross with spirit, soul, and

body one becomes capable of "turning pain into a source of life and resurrection" (Speech).

No man, by himself, could ever conceive forgiveness as a due act. Turning the other cheek, not opposing the wicked, being reconciled with the brother before coming to the altar, doing good to the personal enemy and praying for persecutors is not behavioural discipline suggested to a weak, fragile, easily corruptible human nature. Only by letting one be perennially immersed forever in the grace that flows from Christ Crucified it is possible to pass from the immanent to the transcendental plane of life, placing the beatitudes as the foundation of the personal being and behaving.

When evil intercepts the existence of the operator of peace, of the meek, of the merciful, it must be stopped in that body, it must be extinguished by that heart and must be offered by that soul to the Lord as a sacrifice pleased to him: "It is necessary that some have the courage to take the first step in this direction, without waiting for others to do it" (Speech). For these, the Pope addresses a prayer of blessing: "Thank you Lord, for the testimony of those who have inflicted pain and ask for forgiveness; of those who have wrongfully suffered and forgive. This is only possible with your help and with your presence."

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, cover us with her merciful mantle and help us to be always authentic Christians, dispensers of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation.

Father Raffaele Feroletto

**THE DAY
OF THE LORD**
XXVII Sunday O.T. Year A

**HE WILL LEASE HIS VINEYARD
TO OTHER TENANTS**

HE LOOKED FOR JUSTICE (Is 5: 1-7)

The Lord sees his people in all resembling a vineyard he has eradicated from the land of Egypt and planted on a fertile hill. As every good farmer works to harvest good fruits, so too the Lord waited for justice from his vineyard. What is truthfully the justice the Lord was expecting? The purest faithfulness of His people to his Law, his Commandments and to every Good Statute given by him. Instead of justice, the people produced all injustice, forgot the covenant with their God and became an idolatrous and immoral people. What is the consequence of this wicked decision? God can no longer pour out his blessing, can no longer be the God of life for them. He can no longer give them any good. Rather, he must leave them abandoned to themselves. He can only send his prophets so that his people returns to justice, that is, in the purest fidelity to the Commandments and the Law of the Covenant.

**MAKE YOUR REQUESTS KNOWN TO
GOD (Phil 4,6-9)**

St. Paul invites Christians not to be in anguish at anything, but to make their requests to God with every prayer. When does the Lord listen to the prayers of his faithful? It is truth: God always works from very pure fidelity to his Word. Man lives of righteousness and God also lives of righteousness. Listening to every prayer is also part of the Word given by the Lord to his people. If man lives in justice, lives for it, God is also obliged to respond in strict justice. For nothing man must be distressed. The Lord will always meet his requests. When man is in justice, he will always ask

the Lord with wisdom and the Lord will answer with the same wisdom. If man is not in justice, he will ask foolishly, but the Lord will always act with great wisdom. What is the wisdom of God? Ensuring that the man returns to the Law, in fidelity and into the Word. From the Gospel everything will be given to man with wisdom.

**COME, LET US KILL HIM AND AC-
QUIRE HIS INHERITANCE (Mt 21: 33-
43)**

Jesus reveals a substantial change in his Father's vineyard. Isaiah reproached the vineyard for not having yielded fruit of justice. Jesus tells that his Father gave the vineyard to some peasants so that they cultivated and gave him the fruits agreed upon. But they not only do not give the fruits, beat, insult, despise and send all the messengers empty-handed. In the end the Father sends his only son. He is sure they will respect him. He is his son. Peasant decision is immediate. They bring the son out of the vineyard and kill him. The reference that Jesus does to himself is evident. He, the eternal Son of the Father, is brought out of the city and crucified by the farmers of the vineyard. What decision will the Father now take? He will take away the vineyard and give it to a people that will give him the fruits in due time. This is a severe warning for us as well. Either we bear fruit of true righteousness to the Father, or He will abandon us to our sin and choose other people who will take care of his vineyard righteously. Either we give him the fruits, or others will be the ones to give them to him.

by the Theologian, **Father Costantino Di Bruno**