

APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT - BRESCIA

Glances on the family caused by "Amoris Laetitia"

A promising and evocative program on the great beauty that illuminates the family. Four meetings, four "glances on the family" caused by the apostolic exhortation "Amoris Laetitia" (The joy of love), of Pope Francis. It is the initiative that the Apostolic Movement offers in Bozzetto, in inland Brescia.

In "Amoris Laetitia" - the brochure of the program reads - Pope Francis reflects on all aspects of the family institution by fixing his gaze on Christ. In the Exhortation we can see the pastoral solicitude of illuminating the life of families as they are with the light of the Gospel, showing the world that the Christian announcement regarding the family is really a good news (n.1). The Pope wishes to help everyone to catch a glimpse of the desirable treasure of beauty, humanity and gratuitousness that dwells, even if imperfect, in every family relationship, suggesting the source that nourishes it and can preserve it. It is the joy of love, told by the Pope with clear and concrete words, capable of giving us the taste of the personalization of the paths, escaping the insidiousness of the relativization of the goals. The intention of Pope Francis is not that of exhausting the theme treated - love in the family - from the magisterial point of view, but of involving

all the churches so that they can responsibly find appropriate solutions, attentive to local traditions and challenges (n. 3). The reading of "Amoris Laetitia" needs time to be enjoyed and savoured; in it we perceive the desire of speaking to today's families with a new language and a look of closeness, promoting personal discernment paths and a pastoral climate of welcome and integration.

The four meetings are designed in a very agile manner, so that they can arouse the "desire" to read the document, so that everyone, through reading, feels called to take care with love of the life of families, because they "are mainly an opportunity» (n.7).

The appointments, addressed to everyone and in particular to the families, want to be a useful tool that help in the knowledge of the text, in the reflection and discussion. These meetings are an invitation to continue - as the Pope wishes - the synodal journey, in space and time; to cross the threshold of every house, in the light of the Word of God and of the love that dwells there.

The meetings, held by Fr Massimo Cardamone, are fixed in the parish of St. Apollo, on a monthly basis, all starting at 8:30pm.

March 8, 2018 - 1st glance:

The family, a real living sculpture of God. In the light of the Word.

11 April - 2nd glance:

The family between idealism and realism. Reading and interpreting the signs of times.

May 10 - 3rd glance:

The family seen with and from the eyes of Christ. The vocation of spouses and of the family.

June 7 - 4th glance:

The joy and beauty of love. Characteristics of true love.



Father, glorify your name

Glory is the confession of the most pure truth of God, from which every other truth of man and things, of time and eternity is. If the glory of God fails, every other glory fails. Every falsehood and lie introduced into the truth of God becomes and makes itself a lie in things and in man. Jesus asks the Father to glorify his name. He asks him to show how far his divine and eternal omnipotence goes, today, after the creation of heaven, of earth and of man made in his image and likeness and after all the miracles accomplished in favour of his people. Now the Lord must reveal the greatness of his name. Now he must show his divine omnipotence to every man.

It is necessary to know the way through which the Father might reveal himself in the greatest glory, never manifested before. The way is the obedience of Jesus to the divine will, according to the light of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will have to give full fulfilment to every Word that the Father has written for Him through the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. Up to this moment, Jesus has always obeyed. Now he must bring to completion the last part of the obedience. It passes first with the public, official confession before the Sanhedrim of his divine origin. He will have to say under oath, in the tribunal of the sons of Abraham, that He is the Son of man who will come on the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead, he will have to attest that the Father has put all power in heaven and on earth in his hands. Then he will have to seal his public testimony with the blood shed from the cross. Finally, he will have to be pla-

ced in the sepulchre. After that the Son has glorified the Father, the Father will descend into the sepulchre and create for his son from that dead body a spiritual, immortal, glorious and incorruptible body, he will have him sit on his right side in the heavens, constituting him Lord for eternity.

Today Jesus says to the Christian: "I will triumph, I will be glorified, welcomed, recognized as Lord if you have faith". If the disciple will fulfil every Word written in the Gospel for him, under the guidance and the motion, the light and the truth of the Holy Spirit, then Jesus might glorify his name in the world, giving as a reward to the obedient and faithful disciple a multitude of other disciples. But if the Christian does not give fulfilment with his life to every Word written for him in the Book of the Holy Spirit, then all his labours will be in vain. The Father glorifies his name for the obedience of Christ Jesus. The Son glorifies his name in history for the obedience of every one of his disciples. If Christ today is not glorified, it is not because the world rejects him. It is instead because the Christian does not give fulfilment to the Word of life. It is a total folly wanting to build up the religion of Jesus or the following of Him without obedience to his Word. As He was obedient to the Father in the written Word, so the disciple must be obedient to Christ in the written Word. May the Mother of God come to our rescue and give our will the perfect obedience that was hers.

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LENT: TO "TUNE UP" THE HEARTS OF MEN WITH THE WORD OF CHRIST

Reflections starting from the Homily of H.H. Francis on Ash Wednesday (Santa Sabina, 14 February 2018)

"**T**he time of Lent is a good time to correct the dissonant chords of our Christian life and welcome the ever new joyful and hopeful news of the Lord's Passover. The Church, in her maternal wisdom, proposes us to pay special attention to all that can cool and oxidize our believing heart" (Homily).

These words, which the Holy Father pronounced on Ash Wednesday, are very rich in meaning. They invite us to watch over our hearts that are often not in harmony with the heart of Christ. It is as if the Church, in her children, often played dissonant chords with the harmonic structure that the Orchestra Director has designed for it. When this happens, one is incapable of building the Kingdom of God, because he is not moved by the Holy Spirit but by his own thoughts, desires and plans. Therefore, Lent must be a favourable time for us to correct the hidden attitudes and convictions of the heart that are out of tune with the will of God, through a journey of true conversion made of purification and spiritual asceticism. It is a matter of passing - in a purely Easter point of view - from the iniquity of sin to the equity of grace.

In biblical language, iniquity is going against the truth revealed by God, which must govern every relationship that man lives with God, with others, with things, with himself, with the soul, the spirit and the body. He is iniquitous who does not listen to the Word of God and lets himself be conquered by the word of the world that generates and fosters idolatry and immorality. The more a people moves away from the Word that manifests God's will on every

aspect of human life, the more he is delivered to iniquity. The more a people gives itself to iniquity, the more the heart oxidizes and cools. Jesus said this with extreme clarity pronouncing his eschatological discourse that the Gospels tell us: "Due to the spread of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold. But whoever will have persevered to the end will have been saved" (Mt 24.12-13).

Here is then what Lent is: the immediate and firm intention of returning to listening and obeying to the revealed Word, so that in every relationship manifested by the Law of the Lord the truth reigns and the heart oozes with divine joy for the blessing that fills it.

Living Lent in holiness and justice means letting the Word of God be impressed in the heart with indelible characters and thus transformed into a work of exquisite charity under the powerful motion of the Holy Spirit. It is the commitment of every day, the sacrifice of love that must be done by whoever wants to be a true disciple of Jesus and his courageous witness in the world of iniquity.

Only who is in tune with the Word of Christ, which is the Word of the Father, works admirably so that the Church performs the wonderful concert of the salvation that God has written on the pentagram of Heaven. It is in this harmony, and not in another, that hearts return repented to the Father's house and Easter joy explodes everywhere.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, obtain for us every grace of salvation so as not to delay our conversion even for a moment.

Father Rosario Carrabetta

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

THE HOUR HAS COME FOR THE SON OF MAN
TO BE GLORIFIED (V Sunday of Lent - Year B)

I WILL MAKE A NEW COVENANT (Jer 31: 31-34)

The people of God are experiencing the saddest moment of their existence. They have reached the peak of idolatry and immorality. Folly and impiety are at the point of no return. Deafness to the prophets reigns supreme. It is at this historical juncture that the Lord announces through the prophet Jeremiah that in the coming days he would have entered into a new covenant, different in terms of modality and substance from the old one. He would not have written the Law on tables of stone anymore, a Law external to man, always to be learned. Instead he would have written it on everyone's heart. Thus the Law would have become substance, truth and essence of the heart. Who then is the man of the New Covenant? It is the table of the Law for every other man. Seeing him, the whole world sees the Law of the Lord, knows his will and knows how it must be lived. This has been accomplished completely in Christ and it must be accomplished in each of his disciples.

HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE FROM WHAT HE SUFFERED (Hebrews 5: 7-9)

We must always see the mystery of man from the mystery of Christ Jesus. Jesus is the man who learns obedience, living every Word written for him by the Father. The Christian is one who learns obedience, listening to every Word written for him by Jesus the Lord. Christ Jesus was not freed from obedience and not even the Christian might be freed from listening. Obeying is bringing our body, our soul and our spirit into the Word of the Gospel. The suffering of Jesus was that of bringing day by day all of him-

self into the Word of the Father. The suffering of the Christian will be that of bringing all of himself into the Word of Christ the Lord. The first Word is all the Commandments according to the truth and perfection given to them by Jesus. The second Word is to live all the Discourse of the Mountain. When the forces of evil nail you to the cross, you obey, by letting yourself be crucified. Thus we learn obedience.

THE FATHER WILL HONOUR WHOEVER SERVES ME (Jn 12: 20-33)

Jesus is served in only one way: as He served the Father. He served the Father always and only by doing his will. We serve Christ always and only doing his divine will. Since his divine will asks us to live according to his written Word for us, what He wrote for us will have to be accomplished. Jesus served the Father and was honoured by him with the glory of the resurrection. We serve Christ and the Father will also honour us with the glory of our resurrection in Christ and the participation in eternal life in Paradise. Wanting to build on the earth a following of Jesus the Lord without obedience to the Word written by Him for us, is declaring void the law of following. Without obedience to the Word there is no service rendered to Christ. Without service, one has no right to the honour of the Father. We cannot pretend to be glorified with him in eternal bliss tomorrow. As the glory of Christ is the fruit of his obedience, so too our glory must be the fruit of our obedience. No obedience, no glory.

*by the theologian,
Frater Constantino Di Bruno*