

Notes: Two levels, immanence and faith

I believe I have understood that today many who declare themselves non-practitioners, agnostics or non-believers, do not always have real prejudices about faith and the "Church" or "religion".

I think the truth is only one: these people, while approving many things about faith in their hearts, do not essentially accept that there is someone (God - Christ - Church) who governs their lives and tells them what is right to do and what is not. We want to be autonomous, free, independent, to live in an undisturbed way, without moral rules and without "tracks of truth".

They have this fear that, by accepting God, they will never be free again. This is probably the reason why the only way to mask their fear is to create a false ideal, which takes on different names: "anti-conformism", "freedom", "alternative culture", "transgression", etc.

Such a position, founded for the most part on very friable motivations, is nothing but an illusory attempt to interpret life and the world from an earthly perspective, an immanent level where all

that is linked to the possibilities of reason becomes normative, universal and unchangeable. Such a human logic, excludes any reference to the transcendent and becomes the ostentation of human pride, which precludes any possibility that there is a further level of knowledge, that is the supernatural one.

On the other hand, the supernatural level of faith makes it possible to look and interpret things with different eyes, we could say with "evangelical eyes". The condition for entering this level of knowledge is above all faith, as a desire to embrace the gospel and the conversion of life. In this new level, when feelings begin to conform to the word of Christ, the gaze of the believer becomes capable of seeing things and the world in a completely different way than before. He no longer seeks the answers or the reasons for things in himself, but he understands everything in its truth, with the help of divine grace.

Therefore, two levels: one immanent and one supernatural. Christ, incarnating himself, lived the earthly level, in his full human experience, without ever letting himself being conditioned by what was against the will of his Father. Jesus taught us that it is possible, indeed it is necessary to raise our gaze to the level of faith, because only in this way can we understand human life in the light of the Holy Spirit, within a perspective of eternal life. So they are not two opposing levels, even if our risk is always that of making them incompatible.

Father Alessandro Carioti

Watch every moment praying

On the evening of his life, St. Paul confesses to his faithful Timothy what the cornerstones or pillars on which he built his being a disciple of Christ Jesus were. He knows who he believed in (scio enim cui credidi). He has the belief that he fought the good fight (bonum certamen certavi). He has accomplished his race (cursum consumavi) without ever looking back or betraying the gospel entrusted to him. He has kept the faith (fidem servavi). never doubted, never wavered and never thought that the Word of Jesus were not the only true, the only Word of salvation. Never the idea flashed in his mind that with time it had passed out of fashion and urgently needed to be remodelled according to the tastes and feelings of men. He has this strength in his heart because his Gospel is not a word, but a Person: Christ Jesus and this Crucified.

Today, we no longer know who to believe in. Who says something, who says another and who does not even know what to say in relation to the Word of Jesus. We are witnessing a faith without the Word. Many words of men are made to pass off as words of true faith, but the only Word from which the truth of faith is born is missing. Lacking true faith, because the truth of mystery is missing, no good battle can be fought. What race can we complete, if we do not even know the way to go, since everyone dictates his way and his paths? If we start from non-faith from the begin-

ning, we cannot even say we have kept it. Our faith is changeable, changes, transforms itself and becomes something else day after day. We do not even have people who can be pointed out as models of faith for us anymore. Today we do not even want that someone acts as a model. Everyone must walk his own way and follow only his heart. As soon as one breathes air of obligation, of bond and of commitment, he immediately pulls back.

We read the Gospel and we listen that we must watch every moment praying. The exhortation of Jesus to be attentive to ourselves is also read in the Gospel. Our hearts can become heavy in dissipation, drunkenness and life's troubles. It is also written that that day, that is, the day of death, of judgment and of eternal sentence, could fall suddenly. But all these things are just an inert scarecrow of a wheat field for many. Then we add that the mercy of the Father will not send anyone to eternal perdition and the whole Word of God remains without any norm and law value for us. The unwritten word of God has the upper hand over the written Word of God. Since everyone has an unwritten word of God, every link with the God of the written Word dies. Everyone walks as he pleases. He has always a word that justifies his conduct. Mother of God, come to our rescue. Infuse in our hearts the written Word of our God and make us heralds of it, only of it and not of others.

Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno

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Listening in the process of faith that saves

Reflections starting from the Homily of H.H. Francis
for the conclusion of the Synod on young people (28.10.2018)

Bartimaeus [...] is blind and has no one to listen to him; and when he wanted to talk, they silenced him. Jesus hears his cry. And when he meets him he lets him talk. [...] Jesus is not quick, he gives time to listening. Here is the first step to help the journey of faith: listening. It is the apostolate of the ear: listening, before speaking» (Homily).

The Holy Father, on the occasion of the conclusion of the Synod of Bishops on young people, starting from the story of the blind man of Jericho (cf. Mk 11: 46-52), underlined how important "listening" is in the process of faith and salvation.

The ears of Bartimaeus listen to those who speak of Jesus and say his identity: He is the Nazarene, the Son of David. Bartimaeus, thanks to this listening that takes place through ways that we do not know, knows who the one who passes and knows his mission well is. Therefore his faith moves his mouth to translate what he heard in a cry of request for help: "Son of David, have mercy on me!". Bartimaeus does not address this supplication to others, because he knows that these cannot give him but a few coins to continue living in his condition as a blind beggar. The faith of this suffering man knows the truth of the people around him, but he also knows the truth of Christ who is the giver of a new life, which is much more than a penny or an almsgiving. The announced Gospel has this great power of grace: it knows how to give to the listener the right faith that comes from the right knowledge of Christ.

On the other side are the ears of Jesus. These listen to the cry of the blind man of Jericho and do not remain indifferent to it. The cry of Bartimaeus raises the question of Christ:

"What do you want me to do for you?"; the blind man replies: "Rabbi, let me regain my sight!"; listening on the part of Christ is complete and is translated into compassionate fulfilment: "Go, your faith has saved you"; the cry of the heart is appeased and salvation is accomplished: "He immediately saw again and followed him along the road". From the text it emerges that the proclamation of the truth about Christ generates in the hearts light of knowledge, which becomes prayer and desire for freedom from all spiritual slavery and sin. This means that the Church, if she wants man not to seek "alms" to cohabit with the evils he has fallen in, but has the desire to rise again, must offer him the charity of the announcement of the Gospel. In this way she will raise the cry of faith, necessary so that the Son of David has mercy and intervenes with his creative omnipotence.

In this sense, the Church's mission is twofold. On the one hand she must arouse the cry of faith, on the other she must support it. The prophetic mission of the Church is at the beginning of faith, but also on its journey towards the perfect fulfilment of salvation. In fact, it happens that many, as it was for Bartimaeus, try to discourage those who believe in Christ and can induce many to apostasy. Therefore, the Word of God must always be given, in a permanent and wise way.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, help Christians so that in evangelical preaching they do not let themselves be overcome by atheistic thought, in the awareness that only the act of faith in the Gospel leads man to the person of Christ, the only Source of salvation.

Father Giuseppe Carrabetta

The **YOUR HEARTS DO NOT BECOME DROWSY**
Lord's Day (I SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR C)
ROMAN RITE

I WILL RAISE UP FOR DAVID A JUST SHOOT (Jer 33,14-16)

To understand how much prophecy is needed, let us enter for a moment into a forge. We find a blacksmith in it, some bright coals of bright red, hidden under the coals some iron that little by little transforms itself into live fire. The smith is God. The lit coals his Word. Iron in the Word is the history of humanity. It is sufficient that under the coals and the iron the air is missing and everything stops. Coals are no longer bright red. Iron takes its nature back. The blacksmith cannot model it and cannot transform it. The air that feeds the fire is prophecy. The whole Word of God is vivified by it. When the Word is about to go out, to become Word without strength, the Lord comes immediately, blows on it and again it becomes alive. Today the Lord, in a time of full extinguishing of the fire of his Word, announces that He will send the Messiah. He will come according to his oath. Oracle of the Lord.

YOU DO SO EVEN MORE (1Ts 3,12-4,2)

Saint Paul knows that it is not enough starting to taste the joy of Paradise tomorrow. All the fathers came out of the slavery of Egypt. They have not persevered in the faith and all adults of twenty years and over have died in the desert. How do you persevere on the path of faith? First of all with the support of prayer and the example of those already walking on the path to eternal kingdom. Who is ahead must drag those behind. Eternal life is reached if everyone then puts himself in good will and every day takes a step forward to progress in obedience, freeing himself from

vices that hinder the path and also of those small transgressions that slow him down. Today this invitation of Paul to progress is out of place. Everyone is said to possess a particular will of God that cancels and declares non-true every written Word of God both of the Old and New Testaments. If we do not put back the written Word, idolatry will consume our spirit and immortality our flesh.

BE VIGILANT AT ALL TIMES (Lk 21: 25-28.34-36)

Today Jesus warns us. He asks us to watch. He wants each one of us to be attentive to himself, not only to himself, but also to others. In his eternal sky one enters without stain of sin, as just, saints and immaculate. The moment of death marks the point of no return. One is righteous and he remains right forever. One is unrighteous, he remains unrighteous forever. The destination is also different. Justice brings us with God. Injustice takes us away from Him because it makes us fall into eternal darkness. Since death comes without any warning, the moment before one is in time and the next moment we are in eternity, everyone is obliged to make himself be found in the state of justice, never of injustice. For this reason we must be vigilant. If Paradise is for all indiscriminately - against every written Word of God - it is useless to watch, to be careful and to be on the lookout. By now, it is everyone's belief that hell does not exist. But if hell does not exist, faith, charity and hope are of no use. The Gospel is useless.

by the theologian,
Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno