

Grosseto: Meeting on science and faith organized by the Apostolic Movement and Catholic Action

"At the edge of the universe, at the centre of creation": the book published for St. Paul by Fr. Francesco Brancaccio gave the opportunity for an in-depth meeting proposed by the Catholic Action and the Apostolic Movement of Grosseto, on 22 November. The initiative was favourably received by the city hall of the Tuscan city, which has granted the patronage of the use of the Council Chamber, in the historic municipal building.

After the greetings given by the deputy mayor Luca Agresti on behalf of the entire administration, the meeting was moderated by the Catholic Action diocesan president, Marco Rossi, who organized the event together with the Responsible adherent of the Apostolic Movement Silvana Grande. Luca Bernazzani, a research chemist from the University of Pisa, was called to dialogue with the author of the book. He brilliantly solicited the reflections of Fr Brancaccio, the theologian and diocesan assistant of the Apostolic Movement in Catanzaro.

Although the occasions for debate on the confrontation between science and faith are not uncommon, in the public opinion there remains a certain difficulty in composing an organic and relaxed understanding of the two approaches, especially when the great questions most typically human are in-

olved. These are the issues raised by the experience of the universe, of life, of self-consciousness and which are directed toward the interpretation of God, of the world, of the person, of freedom, of truth and of love... Questions that the Christian faith focuses on the horizon of revelation, so that divine charity enlightens them with sense and also involves reason in all its breadth.

- Fr Brancaccio explained - when faith and science enlighten 'reality' according to their respective approaches and specific methodologies, they are neither antagonistic nor alien to each other. In fact, the separation of their competences does not mean the impossibility of any encounter: even if neither can determine or verify with its own method the work of the other, but their questions and their outcomes, their perspectives and their doubts, their knowledge and their limits always enter the horizon on which human reason is open. Even with its limitations, it has the responsibility of letting itself be illuminated by faith and also placing the contributions of science in the horizon of wisdom, where the aim to be achieved is not mere knowledge, but the integral good of the person, society and of all creation.

Therefore, scientific knowledge does not come into conflict with the truths of faith, unless it is ideologically interpreted outside the scientific field and used to answer questions that cannot fall into their method of investigation.

Therefore, dialogue is a condition intrinsic to the statute of faith and science, and not an occasional circumstance. This awareness constitutes an additional resource for an outgoing Church, that, in the mission of witnessing Christ, is confidently extended to the encounter with whatever is human.

Son, why did you do this to us?

Jesus lives of most pure listening to the will of his Father. In the Holy Spirit every day he grows in, growing in grace and in wisdom, he also knows how to listen to the unexpressed or hidden desires in the heart of the Father and to every one of his thoughts. The Father wants him to remain in Jerusalem, because he wishes to show his extraordinary wealth to his people, when a heart opens to his grace, truth, justice and holiness, and Jesus remains. He wants him to go to the temple and talk, discuss, question and answer the teachers of his people and He goes to his Father's house. When Jesus hears the voice of the Father, he loves him so much, he wants to be so pleasing to Him, to the point that the world no longer exists for Him. It is as if Jesus were at once carried from the earth into the heart of the Father, into his eternal bosom, for which he lives. For Jesus only his Father exists.

Mary and Joseph remain on the earth, unaware of the mystery of the Son in relation to the will of his Father. They set off to return to Nazareth together with all the other pilgrims, without realizing that Jesus is not with them. They know the mystery of Jesus of yesterday, they do not know the mystery of today. Yesterday he was not twelve. Today, he is twelve years old. Today a new history begins for him. From today on, he must prepare for his mission. He must be all of the Holy Spirit, more than every other man of God, sent before or that will be sent after. We must prepare ourselves for the mission. how? Through an attentive and vigilant listening to the Father in the Holy Spirit.

Tomorrow, Jesus might not fail even in one word, one gesture, one work and one answer. He will have to be entirely and always from the voice of his Father. Tomorrow temptations will be so many that without a previous preparation, the mission could risk failing. All the powers of evil, visible and invisible, religious and pagan, simple and complex, in isolation and as an army deployed in the field, will fall against him. He will have to overcome them all, always. He must never fall in any temptation.

Mary is unaware of all this mystery. The Holy Spirit has revealed nothing to her. Hence her question: Son, why have you done this to us? Why did you stop in Jerusalem, making us fall into the anguish of having lost you? Jesus' answer is immediate: Did you not know that I must occupy myself with the things of my Father? It's not me the one that has to warn you of what I do. It is you who must inform me of what you do. It is you who always must know the will of my Father on me. The Father wants the Son all for himself. He does not want that there are obediences superior or excluding his on him. He wants everyone to place himself at the service, even Mary and Joseph, so that his Son can always do his will. The Father wants that, learning from Christ Jesus, everyone puts himself listening to his voice and only to his. Mother of the Redemption, teach us, your children, how to listen to the will of the Father and how ready, immediate and solicitous obedience must be given it.

Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno

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THIS POOR CRIES AND THE LORD HEARS TO HIM

REFLECTIONS STARTING FROM THE MESSAGE OF H.H. FRANCIS FOR THE II WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

«**T**his poor cries and the Lord hears him» (Ps 34,7). On the basis of this verse from the Psalm, the Holy Father writes the message for the Second World Day of the Poor. What is the relationship of the disciple of Jesus with poverty and with the poor? The Psalm uses three verbs to describe the relationship between the poor and God: shout, respond, release.

He who cries is the poor because his condition forces him to make his voice heard, but the cry of the poor in this Psalm is a cry of hope, because he knows that the Lord hears the cry of his servants, of those who entrust themselves to him sure not to be disappointed, with the certainty that the Lord is ready to guard them with his providence.

The one who answers and frees is the Lord and his answer is always strength, comfort, light and liberation. The Lord hears the cry of his servant, frees him from all his anxieties (see Psalm 34:18), makes sure that every servant of his is guarded and protected from evil and intervenes against the wicked so that he desists to do evil (cf. Ps 34, 21-23).

Who is the servant the Lord hears, to whom He answers and frees? In the same psalm we find the answer: "Fear the Lord his saints: nothing is lacking to those who fear him. Lions are poor and hungry, but those who seek the Lord do not lack in any good. Come, children, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (Ps 34: 10-12). The Lord promises his help to those who trust in him, to those who walk according to his Word, to those who obey his will which is light and way to salvation. If this condition is missing, the promise of the Lord also falls. He is faithful to his Word which is eternal and will never fail, but this has conditions that must

be observed. If man is within these conditions, then he will not have to fear any evil because the Lord will be his guardian.

From what the Psalm says we get the answer to the question we asked ourselves at the beginning. The disciple of Jesus has a peaceful relationship with poverty, because he knows that everything that is given or granted to him is not his property, but belongs to the Lord who grants it in administration so that every good is shared for the benefit of all (cf. 12.13 to 20). The Christian is part of the body of Christ, his identity enables him to hope for divine providence, but also asks him to provide for those parts of the body that are weaker (see 1 Cor 12: 21-24).

On the basis of the example of Jesus in the Gospel, the Church also, however, must always be vigilant to remain in her mission which is that of generating and cultivating holiness. What distinguishes the work of the Church from that of a humanitarian association? The purpose of the work itself: leading to Christ and therefore to salvation. Therefore, it is also necessary to collaborate with other associations in order to meet the needs of the poor, "provided we do not neglect what is proper to us, that is, leading everyone to God and to holiness. The dialogue between the different experiences and the humility to lend our collaboration, without any sort of protagonisms, is an adequate and fully evangelical response that we can realize" (Message).

Virgin Mary, Help of Christians, ensure that we always learn from Christ how to act and support each other to reach the blessed homeland of Heaven.

Father Gregorio Nicola Corea

**The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE**

**THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE, SITTING
IN THE MIDST OF THE TEACHERS
(HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - YEAR C)**

HE SHALL BE DEDICATED TO THE LORD (1Sam 1: 20-22.24-28)h

By nature every man who comes into the world is of the Lord, because he is the fruit of his blessing, of his grace and of his love. If he is of the Lord, he must be offered to Him and the parents who asked for him are the ones that must offer him. Giving the Lord the son asked, offering him because He demands him, is an act of true adoration and true latria. It is recognized that the Lord is the Lord of themselves and their own son. Anna is a sterile woman. She asks God for a child. She promises to give it to him if she had got it. The child is given to her. Now she takes him to the temple to let her God to be the one who demands him and makes him his own. How the Lord will make his a son offered to him, we do not know. But we know that he must be offered to him so that his every right is respected. When a father, a mother, do not respect this right of the Lord, their cult is vain and their religion lacks in an essential and fundamental truth. God is the Lord of every man's life. Every life is his.

WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN NOW (1Jn 3,1-2.21-24)

We are by nature God's creatures, made by Him in his image and likeness. We are children by creation, but not by generation. We are children also because it is the Lord the one that creates our soul at the moment of conception. With baptism there is a mystery in us that goes infinitely beyond creation itself. From people created in the image and likeness of God, we are people generated by God, in the Holy Spirit. In the waters of baptism, we become partakers of divine nature, we are made sons of the Father in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the new life generated

in us by the Holy Spirit. This new dignity or essence obliges us to live as true children of God. How do we live as true children? Producing in us the works of the new nature. If we are God's nature through participation, we must manifest the fruits of the new nature. Living today according to the new nature, we have a right of justice to eternal glory.

WHY WERE YOU LOOKING FOR ME? (Lk 2,41-52)

At twelve, Jesus entered a new relationship with his God and Lord. Being He true man, as a true man he must lend to God the cult of obedience to his voice. Not only to the written law or the statutes given by him to the fathers. The rules of the Covenant also call for listening to the voice of the Lord that today speaks to the heart and also to the ear of man. Jesus, true son of the covenant, listens to the voice of the Father, remains in Jerusalem, enters the temple of his Father and begins to discuss with the teachers, letting himself be interrogated and questioned. Mary and Joseph know nothing of this immediate obedience to the voice of the Father. They head homeward, thinking that Jesus is in the caravan. Only in the evening do they notice his absence. They go back and on the third day they find him in the house of the Lord. Mary would like to know, to understand. Jesus refers her to the will of the Father. The Father told me to stop and I stopped. My life is of the Father, as true God and true man. It is only his and no one else's either on earth or in the heavens. Jesus is of God.

*by the theologian,
Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno*