

CATANZARO: ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

Dialogue with the association Ra.Gi onlus

The voluntary service promoted by the Apostolic Movement in the territory has always been an essential aspect of its mission of remembrance and proclamation of the Gospel.

In many places the service is structured in a systematic way and a particular sector of commitment is constituted by the pastoral care of health and assistance to the elderly. At the Central Seat of Catanzaro there is a very large group of volunteers, who in a stable and articulated way offer their presence in a large number of treatment and rehabilitation centres.

Making people aware towards persons in need of assistance in body and spirit also favours a more direct opening towards the knowledge of the social environment in which the adherents live and work.

It is on these premises that the pleased occasion of dialogue with the association Ra.Gi Onlus Demenze Calabria, founded and directed by Dr. Elena Sodano, started in Catanzaro.

A small group of assistants and of the Central Council visited the Day Centre, which the association activated in the

outskirts of the city, where people with dementia and their families come from all over Calabria every day. We were able to contact a dynamic fruitful, alive and colourful reality animated by expert people, rich in humanity and determination, that allow dozens of guests to enjoy an environment in which they can really bring to the fore their abilities, their memory and their openness to relationships, avoiding their state of dementia to become a condemning sentence to the drooping and passive expectation of the inevitable.

The occasion was immediately created to organize a meeting in which Dr. Sodano could describe, with all her enthusiasm and competence, the activity of the Association and its approach to dementia, based on the method called "Integrated Body Expressive Therapy", which is arousing strong interest in Italy and abroad. So, on March 15th, in the hall of Mary Mother of the Church parish, many adherents of the Apostolic Movement intervened to listen to her. The result was an experience of great value, for a greater sensitivity towards the reality of dementias, the perspectives of those affected, the innumerable hardships of families, with their burden of worries and disappointments, but also of certainties and hopes that the Association manages to rekindle in them.

It was also agreed that some members of the Apostolic Movement, even young people, will be able to offer their volunteer contribution in favour of the Association activities.



Go and from now on don't sin anymore

The Lord not only grants pardon, forgives our sins, invites Himself through all his prophets each to abandon the way of evil, also sets conditions so that He can forgive all our misdeeds, abominations and wickedness: the will to abandon the way of evil and every path of injustice; the firm and resolute intention to remain forever in his Law. Without these two conditions, no request for forgiveness can be granted. A third, also essential, is the forgiveness given to each of our debtors. God forgives us if we forgive. If we do not forgive, neither will He forgive us and we will die in our sin. However, we know that if one dies in grave sin, there is no welcome in his eternal abodes. We will live forever without seeing the light of his face.

Today, having separated us man from God, from nature, from the Law, from the Gospel, from objective truth and from supernatural and eternal justice, there is no longer any relationship with what is outside of man. Everything is closed in his heart: will, desires, instincts, whims, imaginations and fantasies. Good and evil are subjective things and never objective. Without any eternal divine law or even of nature, nothing is sin, disobedience and transgression anymore. Everything is allowed. Everything is possible. All doable. Even the most serious offenses done against our nature are normal, today. Indeed, we want them to be declared good things with laws made by men. We com-

plain about inhuman laws made yesterday, but today we approve and fight for even more inhuman laws. We overload us with an even greater burden. In fact, those who condemn the crimes of yesterday have no excuse either before God or before men of the crimes of today.

Today, whoever has failed is just the Christian. It is he who has taken the hinges off the eternal principles of his being a disciple of Christ Jesus. It is he who is abandoning justice and truth that come from the Law of his Lord and from the Word of his Master, to appeal only to his conscience, from which he is scraping every residue of the Holy Spirit and of the Gospel. Everything must be by the will. What the Christian wants is good. What he doesn't want is bad. According to this foolish rule, as the conscience becomes petrified, even the greatest injustices and the most heinous crimes will be declared human dignity, true social and civil progress and authentic growth in humanity. When you exit the objective and universal law, there is no more restraint. Every crime will be declared a good and every wickedness worthy of a man. But let us never forget that every sin has its very high cost, to be paid both in history and in eternity. Jesus forgives. But he also asks that we no longer sin. Mother of God, ensure that we believe in the Word of Christ the Lord. It is the only Word of eternal life. Ours are words of death.

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Movimento Apostolico

Non-profit Apostolic Movement Weekly.
Free distribution. Publisher: Apostolic Movement
Responsible Director: Costantino Di Bruno.

With ecclesiastical approval of the
Archbishopric Curia of Catanzaro-Squillace.

Authorization no. 75 of 8-2-1990 of the Court of Lamezia Terme.
Directorate, Editorial, Administration: Via B.Musulino, 23/E, Catanzaro.

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Printed by the press office of the Apostolic Movement

JESUS GOES TO MEET HIS PEOPLE Reflections from the Homily of H.H. Francis on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (2.2.2019)

On the occasion of the Day dedicated to the consecrated life, the Holy Father invited us to imitate the old Simeon at the Temple of Jerusalem and therefore to welcome Jesus who comes to meet us. He, who is the God of life, must be met every day of life; not every now and then, but every day: "Following Jesus is not a decision taken once and for all, it is a daily choice. When we welcome him as the Lord of life, the centre of everything, the beating heart of everything, then He lives and lives again in us. With Jesus we find the courage to go on and the strength to remain steadfast" (Homily). It is particularly important to go back to the sources for those who are consecrated: going back with the memory to the decisive encounters with Him, reviving the first love.

Our founding encounter with the Lord did not arise as a private thing between us and God, but blossomed in the believing people, alongside so many brothers and sisters, in specific times and places. The Gospel affirms this, showing how "the encounter takes place in the people of God, in its concrete history, in its live traditions: in the temple, according to the Law, in the climate of prophecy, with the young and the elderly together" (Homily). Thus consecrated life too: it blooms and flourishes in the Church and matures when the young and the old walk together. You can't walk alone. Here is why we must ask for the gift of rediscovering the living Lord, in the believing people, and of bringing together the charisma received with the grace that is always new and capable of vivifying it.

Then, the Holy Father pointed out that when the Lord calls, two elements intervene, which are the Law and the Holy Spi-

rit: "Two young men come to the temple called by the Law; two elders moved by the Spirit. What does this double call, of the Law and the Spirit, say to our spiritual life and to our consecrated life? That we are all called to a double obedience: to the law - in the sense of what gives good order to life - and to the Spirit, who does new things in life" (Homily). This is how communion with Christ is born: the Spirit reveals the Lord, but to welcome him we need daily obedience to the Gospel that brings order into our lives. Word of God and Holy Spirit go together and insert the believer into the bosom of the ecclesial and community life.

If this law is practiced with love, the Pope concludes, "the Spirit comes and brings the surprise of God, as in the temple and in Cana. Then, the daily life water turns into the wine of novelty and life, which seems more constrained, but actually becomes freer". Thus consecrated life becomes a prophetic vision in the Church, a gaze that sees God present in the world, even though many do not notice it; a voice that says: "God suffices, the rest passes"; and a praise that flows from the depths of the heart.

Therefore, consecrated life is "called to the faithful daily obedience and to the unpublished surprises of the Spirit. It is a vision of what is important to embrace in order to have joy: Jesus" (Homily).

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, who takes part in a special way in the Ministry of Jesus, Redeemer of man, in whom every vocation, mission and charisma in His Church is born and develops, help us in our every choice,.

Father Francesco Vardè

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

LET THE ONE AMONG YOU WHO IS WITHOUT SIN
(V SUNDAY OF LENT - Year C)

REMEMBER NOT THE EVENTS OF THE PAST (Is 43,16-21)

Whoever wants to live by right faith in the true God, in the God who is the only Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, in the God who governs peoples and nations with his eternal wisdom, must remember the past but only as a manifestation of an ever new daily omnipotence, knowing that what God will accomplish today will be the revelation of an omnipotence never manifested before. Is there an omnipotence of love greater than that which the Lord manifests with Christ Jesus Crucified? Is there a higher redemption and liberation than that performed by Jesus on the cross? But immediately after the revelation of his omnipotence on Golgotha follows the other manifestation which is that of the glorious resurrection. Is there today a greater manifestation of omnipotence than that revealed in a Christian who remains faithful to Christ and of a non-Christian who gets converted to Jesus Crucified, Risen and Lord of history? God is always eternal novelty.

FORGETTING WHAT LIES BEHIND (Phil 3,8-14)

St. Paul saw the Lord on the road to Damascus. Might he always think of that day and that moment? Christ Jesus is not behind, he is ahead of Him. Since Jesus is eternal novelty of love, he runs towards this novelty. Paolo's is a race that will never end. When he thinks he has reached Jesus Lord in love, it is then that he must begin. Jesus is infinitely beyond and attracts him, so that he never gives up and never gets tired of growing in charity. When we no

longer run behind Jesus Christ, then it is a sign that our love is dying. If love for Him dies, faith in his Gospel and hope in all that the Gospel promises will soon fail and will die. We will remain disciples of Jesus, but we will only be sad officials of the Word and mediocre employees of his grace. We will lack the ever-new resource of the Holy Spirit that urges us to walk in ways of ever new wisdom to arrange that many souls let themselves be attracted by Christ Jesus and his love.

HAS NO ONE CONDEMNED YOU? (Jn 8.1 to 11)

The Pharisees do not care at all about the woman. She can keep on sinning to the point of nausea for them. She is only a bait to smudge Christ the Lord, accuse him of denying the Law of Moses, so as to be able to stone him and legally remove him. Hate, envy and detestation against him must be well hidden. The Law of Moses is an excellent mask in the service of their murderous will. Jesus knows the depths of Satan that rules their hearts and gives no response. They insist. His answer is simple: you can apply the Law of Moses to this woman, on one condition: that he casts the first stone who is without sin. Whoever threw the first stone was responsible for the death inflicted. Everyone leaves. All are sinners. The woman remains. Jesus does not condemn her. But he tells her not to sin anymore. One is forgiven for living in the Law, never for transgressing it. But one is also forgiven when he wants to get out of disobedience and become obedient.

by the theologian,
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