

"YOU ARE THE REASON":

YOUNG PEOPLE MEETING IN PREPARATION OF THE 2019 MEETING

The last meeting of the young people of the Apostolic Movement was held in the Mary Mother of the Church parish in Catanzaro on 21 July, in preparation for the 2019 Meeting dedicated to the letter *Christus vivit* of Pope Francis. Having been moderated by Marco Bagnato, Antonio Afeltra and Daniela Tassone, the event brought together young people from the city various parishes and from the province, on the theme For a reason.

Opening the meeting, Fr Francesco Brancaccio (Diocesan Assistant of the Apostolic Movement) urged the young present to believe in the enormous potential that God has bestowed on each one of them, inviting them to know how to love the origin of their mission and concretize it according to their talents.

Fr Gesualdo De Luca (Regional Assistant of the Apostolic Movement), echoing some passages of the apostolic exhortation *Christus vivit* of Pope Francis, also urged the boys to walk on the example of Jesus, who "is the true youth of an aged world" (No. 32). That is why, he continued, "with your faith, your example, you young people can give the world a new soul".

Cettina Marraffa's speech (author and promoter of several musicals) was really touching; through a test between two young people comparing each other she wanted to show that each person has many positive resources deposited in his soul. One more rea-

son to believe in the personal self and avoid being demoralized in the face of life's difficulties and own limits. "We are all made of good and beautiful things", that is why, she emphasized, "negative things must not annul riches present in all of us".

The meeting was also enriched by some videos and new songs on faith (such as the evocative song performed by Pierpaolo Vallone and Iris Pansini), which young people proposed as a reflection on the evening thematic light.

A video was also shown on the miraculous fishing and on the call of Peter, taken from a famous film. Fr Salvatore Bilotta (animator of the Seminary San Pio X - Catanzaro) has taken inspiration to recall the importance of vocational discernment. Referring also to some testimonies of his vocation, he explained that God takes great care of everyone's life. Then he added that, even in the lives of young people, the Lord never ceases to call some to the priestly ministry and to consecrated life. In this sense, one must always remain in a correct and spiritually adequate life, letting himself be helped by all those carers who must provide the necessary tools to respond to God's call on each one of them.

"If there is a reason to life, this is given mainly by the call of each to holiness". These are the words of the young seminarian Giuseppe Carioti who, commenting a video/testimony on the life of the Servant of God Carlo Acutis, recalled a phrase: "All are born as originals but then they die as photocopies". Thus he highlighted the possible temptation of "conforming ourselves to ways of being that prevent us from living our own originality linked to our divine project".

Surprisingly, at the end of the evening, the young designed a flash mob in the church courtyard, showing the joy of those who let themselves be involved in the "reason of faith". There is always a reason when it is Christ who moves the "rudder of our life".



With his clothes tight at the hips

It is truth testified by history: "Man is the one who has the breath on loan". It is a loan made to him by his Lord, Creator and God. It is a breath that the Lord can request at any time. There is no minute of the day or night when the Lord cannot take his breath back. This truth would be irrelevant, without any weight, if there were not other three truths that are the essence of every man's life. Once the breath has been delivered to the Lord, man presents himself before him for eternal judgment. Everyone will be judged on the basis of his works, of good or evil, of justice or injustice, of charity or selfishness, of love or hate, of peace or war and of harmony or division. The merciful, compassionate, but also just Lord of man, will give to each according to his works. The doors of light, peace and eternal joy of Paradise will open for those who have worked good. Instead, there will be eternal condemnation in fire and darkness for those who have done evil and died in it.

If we deprive our life of the right eschatology - and the one that confesses the four newcomers: death, judgment, hell and paradise is the right eschatology - it serves no purpose to be ready, with clothes tight at the hips and the lamps lit. If there is nothingness after death, everything is consumed in the span of time that goes from birth to death. Either one is good or one is bad, or just or unjust, nothingness is our fate. If after death there is only Paradise, as many children of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church are asserting today - against

all truths of Revelation and sound doctrine - even in this case it is of no use of being ready. We die and we go to Heaven. Either one has been good or has been bad, the fate is the same. It is useless to watch, to be careful, if then, there is no danger of death or eternal damnation. When one truth is denied, all the others are made vain. What is the use of observing the Commandments, if the eternal blessing is for everyone? Instead, if Revelation is true and those who die in injustice, as wicked and as evil people, will end up in eternal darkness, then it is a right thing to watch.

Today most Christians - even those who say they are of special and particular spirituality - have lost touch with the Word of the Lord. They have forgotten it. Because without the Word of truth and light, they say everything from their heart. Since the heart is an abyss of evil, without the truth of Christ, everyone prophesies from the falsity of his mind and his spirit. Even if with every good will, one puts all his efforts, his science and wisdom and his doctrine, in order to find the truth of the Word in the words of the disciples of Jesus, not only is it difficult, but also impossible to him. Today the personal thought is the criterion of justice. Without the Word of objective truth, there is no more justice on earth. Justice for one is injustice for the other. The mercy of one is an act of delinquency to the other. Mother of God, ensure that every Christian hears with the Word and speaks from the Word for all the days of his life.

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CHRIST LOVES YOU, CHRIST SAVES YOU, CHRIST LIVES

Reflections starting from the fourth chapter of the Apostolic Exhortation "Christus vivit" of St. St. Francis

In the fourth chapter of *Christus vivit*, Pope Francis invites all young people to put into their hearts three truths that are fundamental for living peacefully and carrying out the project that God has for them.

The first truth is that Christ loves every young person with an eternal love: "If you have already heard it, it does not matter, I want to remind it to you: God loves you. Never doubt it, whatever happens to you in life. In any circumstance, you are infinitely loved" (ChV 112). On this love we must found our existence, knowing that life is a mystery that has its reasons in God. These cannot always be understood, but surely one can always live remaining firm in the will of the heavenly Father, who wants in every circumstance the greatest good for his children and slowly educates and moulds them in the image of Christ, Model of the new and redeemed humanity. We must not let doubts, fears and insecurities triumph, but rather we must proceed resolutely on the path of our own sanctification, knowing that "when God asks you something or when he simply allows those challenges that life presents to you, he expects you to make room for him to move you to go on, to spur you on in order to make you mature" (ChV 117).

The second truth is that Christ saves. He is the only Redeemer of man, and therefore of every young man: "Jesus for love, gave himself till the end to save you. His open arms on the cross are the most precious sign of a friend capable of reaching the extreme. [...] That Christ who saved us on the cross from our sins, with the same power of his total self-giving continues to save us and redeem us today" (ChV 118-119). Salvation is

liberation from the ignorance of Christ, mother of every slavery and of that existential sadness that swells the heart when one does not live intimately linked to Him: "Dear young people, you have no price! You are not pieces to sell at the auction! Please don't let yourself be bought, don't let yourself be seduced, don't let yourself be enslaved by ideological colonisations that put strange ideas in your head and in the end we become slaves, dependent and people that failed in life" (ChV 122). However, each one must personally decide to choose Jesus as the only Master and Redeemer, without putting up any resistance to his wise love: "Look at the open arms of the crucified Christ, let yourself always be saved again" (ChV 123).

The third truth is that Christ lives! He is not a concept, a corpse, a piece of wood that hangs on the wall. He is the Risen One! He is the Living One who walks with us and with his omnipotence assists those who trust in him: "We must remember him often, because we run the risk of taking Jesus Christ only as a good example of the past, as a memory, as someone who saved us two thousand Years ago. This would serve us nothing, it would leave us the same as before, it would not free us. He who fills us with his grace, He who frees us, He who transforms us, He who heals us and comforts us is someone who lives. He is the risen Christ, full of supernatural vitality, clothed with infinite light" (ChV 124).

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, ensure that every young person makes these three truths his own and lets himself be loved, saved and vivified by your Son Jesus, the only source of true joy.

Father Lucio Bellantoni

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

YOU ALSO MUST BE PREPARED
(XIX SUNDAY O.T. - Year C)

AWAITED THE SALVATION OF THE JUST (Wis 18,6-9)

Our faith confesses that the Lord does not want the death of the sinner, but that he is converted and lives. Every faithful worshiper of the true and living God must want the same thing and that is that every man is converted. However, will is not enough. As God, the true God, gave his only-begotten Son for the salvation of the world, so also every true disciple of Jesus, must give Jesus his life, so that he becomes in him and for him one sacrifice and one holocaust for the salvation of his brothers. The true disciple of Jesus does not only await for the salvation of the just, he puts every commitment with the gift of his life, so that many others can reach eternal joy. He does not await for the death of the wicked, because God does not await for their death. He works only for salvation, because Christ worked only for salvation. The will of God and the will of his worshiper, the work of Christ and the work of each one of his disciples, are and must remain one.

FAITH IS EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN (Heb 11.1-2.8-9)

Our life moves on two truths: the invisible and visible truth. The visible truth is almost nothing. The invisible truth is everything for every man. One arrives at the invisible truth by science, deduction, argumentation and demonstration, by necessarily following two paths: an interior one, that of conscience, which carries written in itself the truth of God and of man, of time and eternity, of good and of evil and of every other created reality. We know that with sin the conscience can be suffocated and man

becomes blind. This is what is happening today. The suffocation of conscience is becoming universal. The other way is that of Revelation. For immense love God reveals to man all invisible truth. It is contained in his Word. If man believes in the Word of the Lord, welcomes it into his heart, lives every command, he knows the invisible truth and will be saved.

AT AN HOUR YOU DO NOT EXPECT (Lk 12.32-48)

It is revealed truth, confirmed daily by history: we know the time in which a person sees the light, nobody knows the time in which he will abandon time to enter eternity. Since eternity is not only of light, but also of darkness, it is not only of life, but also of death, we are all warned so that death never finds us unprepared, that is, it finds us unjust, miser, thieves, dishonest, impure, lustful, slothful, immersed in evil, disobedient and in the transgression of the commandments. If it were to find us in this state of spiritual misery, the doors of the eternal curse would open for us. Instead, when death comes, it will have to find us poor in spirit, pure at heart, merciful, peacemakers, hungry and thirsty for justice, meek and humble like Christ Jesus. If we are found this way, it will be joy and eternal life for us. Since no one today believes in eternal perdition, everyone thinks to live as he likes best. Everyone believes that we can trample the commandments and everyone believes that he can build the rules of justice himself. It is a thought that leads to death.

by the theologian,
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