

RESONANCES OF THE APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT'S YOUTH MEETING

On August 3, 2019, the Youth Meeting organized by the Apostolic Movement on the theme "Other dreams the world does not offer", inspired by the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christus vivit* of H.H. Francis, was held.

During the Meeting, the young people also had the opportunity to meet in reflection groups, each dedicated to a theme taken from the exhortation. Some resonances have arisen, which have been reported before all the participants. On this page (and in the following numbers) we leave space for some of these items.

1 / Carriers of a promise

A yes. That "yes" during the marriage vow, that "yes" to a dream now become the will to be a family: in that "yes" everyone history begins. Mom and Dad choose to put together their personal dreams and plans to create a single backpack, born of a promise and now full of new promises, to be carried out together. Mom and Dad, loaded with their backpack of real life, at birth give us a backpack of life to be lived and so we wear it and we take to the road.

But to whom it never happen to forget a backpack or a bag? How many times have hurry, homework and then work distracted us? And then, how many times were we convinced having lost something

while it was already there with us, in that backpack, perhaps hidden by a bit of disorder?

Here it goes, the same happens on our journey: we often forget the value of our backpack, we often do not believe we are enough, we often forget we are bearers of a promise.

In birth we receive some talents, skills to which we are naturally brought, but then do we remember about them? Do we get involved to make those gifts concrete?

Faith and awareness of being beneficiaries of a gift ensure that the attitude becomes commitment and efficiency, because that backpack full of dreams and promises is a part of us, and in and with faith we never forget it anymore because we are those dreams and those promises.

From that initial "yes" we learn to say other "yes" to the right promises, and we want to say an important "yes" to the Apostolic Movement. A promise: a light that cannot remain hidden; a yes: I want to live this light and be light for others.

And so let us try to pass the baton to our brothers: let us put to good use the promises that God has entrusted to us so that others, seeing us, will find the courage and desire to fulfil their promises, all together on the way to what is the most beautiful promise of all, eternal life, with no more fear for, as St. Augustine says, "we have a promise: who might nullify it? If God is in our favour, who is against us? Ask and it will be given to you; search and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you. [...] These are your promises, and how can you fear being deceived when the truth itself is the one to make promises?"

Maria Nocchi

He cannot be my disciple

Every man is in the slavery of sin and death. This is our condition. It is not a static but a dynamic reality. We grow from death to death, from sin to sin, from vice to vice and from foolishness to foolishness. Being in this universal slavery, man serves man from falsehood not from truth, for death not for life. Whoever is in slavery - and every man is born in this state - will always be for man from falsehood for death, never from truth for life. It means that those who are slaves of falsehood will use their scientific, philosophical, anthropological, psychological, social, economic, financial, religious, artistic and all technological progress more for evil than for good, more for injustice than for justice and more for death than for life. We all know this very sad reality. Yesterday's impossible has become possible today. But how many death fruits do not we experience every day?

Now let us imagine God comes, in the Person of Christ Jesus, and tells us: "Do you want to pass from death to life? Do you want to place yourself in the service of truth and never of falsehood anymore? Do you want to work for good and not for evil, to love and not to hate, to give light and not darkness, to create hope and not anxiety? If you want, you must put myself at my exclusive service. You must be only from my will. I make you free from all the works of the flesh, I will make you bear fruit in the Holy Spirit. You will taste the joy of true freedom from evil today and in addition I will give you eternal life, as soon as your soul leaves the earth with your death". It is a conditioned offer. It is a real pact, a real

contract. This pact is called an Alliance. We read it, if we welcome it and we sign it. Jesus will sign it with his blood and man also will have to sign it with his blood, from this moment on offered to Christ so that he may use it to love from the truth, from the light, from justice and from the will of his Father, according to every motion of the Holy Spirit. Christ Jesus puts on the contract a signature that is valid for eternity. Even the man who welcomes it puts a signature that is valid forever.

But man is tempted. He can sign the contract and then become unfaithful to it. If he withdraws from his signature, all the promises of the contract fail and he returns to the slavery of sin and death, a slavery that will be consumed in the eternal darkness of the burning fire that never wears out. Instead, today the Christian says, affirms and teaches that Paradise is for everyone and that there is no contract to be observed. He writes and preaches to the four winds that there is no need for a Covenant with Christ to be free today and in eternity. All this is in clear contrast with Revelation, with the manifested will of God. Man overcomes this obstacle, stating that Scripture is a simple way of saying, but without any truth in it. It is an ancient fairy tale and ancient fairy tales are all the words contained in it. Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we believe in the truth of Holy Scripture. Convince the Christian that he is the visible and historical truth of every Word of Lord Jesus.

Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno

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Preparing hearts for God's call

Reflections starting from the ninth chapter
of the Apostolic Exhortation "Christus vivit" of H. H. Francis

The vocation is a grace to be asked incessantly from the Lord, without getting tired. It cannot be the fruit of a commitment or a human desire. The vocation, being the grace par excellence from which an incalculable infinity of good flows for the people of God, is a gift of God's mercy to be asked with perseverance and humility.

However, the strength and primacy of grace do not reduce the responsibility of priests and laity for the discovery of the vocation of the young. Today as yesterday the called people are many, too many, - St. John Bosco used to say "two out of three" - but few are able to perceive the voice of God that speaks to their heart (ChV 294). Therefore, it is necessary to put at the centre of the formation of young people everything that allows them to prepare their hearts and minds for the desire of God, in order to develop strong choices that are the result of a freedom lived and given out of love. In fact, a young person can hardly recognize and choose God's plan among the many projects of the world if he is not gradually oriented, by those who have the responsibility for his spiritual and moral growth, towards evangelical values (ChV 281). Therefore, if it is true that the vocation is, above all, a grace to be asked of God incessantly through prayer (Mt 9:38), it is equally true that the seed of vocation grows well, so as to bear fruit, in the field of the Word heard and lived (Mt 13, 23). We have the task of preparing fertile and welcoming fields!

Above all, a vocation grows and matures, in the field of the Church. It is in this terrain that the voice of God resounds loudly, without uncertainties, distinguishing and separating itself from all the other voices or

desires of the soul. It is in this field that God has placed priests as a guide, to enlighten souls to make choices according to God. It is in the Church that we receive Jesus the Eucharist, his forgiveness and his mercy for a path from grace to grace and from virtue to virtue. It is in the Body of Christ that communion with all members is experienced, there is predisposition to service, putting to good use those "qualities, inclinations, gifts and charismas that are not for us, but for others" (ChV 286). Inviting young people to live within their own parish community, actively participating in them, constantly following formation meetings dedicated to them, choosing a spiritual father for inner growth might certainly foster and encourage those choices of consecration for the Kingdom of Heaven.

The vocation matures in the field of true morality and spirituality. Even if calls to priesthood of persons far from the faith and way of the Gospel are known, we certainly cannot think that God must and always wants to act in an extraordinary and direct way, making up for our shortcomings. Let us think of Samuel and other young people that grace worked through family upbringing and of the example of virtuous people who perceived and showed them God's plan. Talking about guarding one's body, inviting to prayer, to obedience, to sacrifice, to respect and to be disgusted of sin can help a vocation very much.

May the Virgin Mother of the Redemption instil in us the courage of knowing how to show young people the high goals of the Gospel, without discounts to joyfully welcome God's plan.

Father Salvatore Bilotta

**The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE**

**WHOEVER DOES NOT CARRY HIS OWN CROSS
(XXIII SUNDAY O.T. - Year C)**

AND SCARCE DO WE GUESS THE THINGS ON EARTH (Wis 9,13-19)

In his eternal love for man, not only did our God create him in his image and likeness, since the first day of his existence he communicated him his will, revealed him his heart, introduced him to the his mystery and showed him the invisible. Today, the man decided not to want any God, either true or false, above him. He himself wants to be lord, creator and master of himself. This satanic thought is poverty and misery, but mother of every other spiritual and material misery and poverty. It is a misery of death, more than if fish decided to live without water and more than if birds wanted to live without air or men without any connection with nature. It's death. With men, death is not only physical, but also eternal. Either we return to the true God, or there will be no life for man, either today or in eternity. God is the life of every man, God is his water, his air and his food.

WELCOME HIM AS YOU WOULD ME (Phil 9b-10.12-17)

Saint Paul sends back to his master Philemon, a slave, Onesimus, who had freed himself from his slavery and had taken refuge with the apostle. This gesture reveals two truths: the Christian can live in any social, economic and familiar situation or other condition. His life was offered to Christ Jesus and the Lord leads it to its greatest good. But the Christian is not a creator of slaves but of free men. It is not the physical condition the one that weighs on men, but the spiritual one. Today we are all free, emancipated and autonomous. But we are under the heavy slavery resulting from

every hatred, falsehood, envy, lies, exploitation, deception and death. We also made ourselves slaves of science and technology. Every relationship of man with man and of man with nature suffers from the slavery of sin. This is the Christian mission: transforming the slavery of death into a relationship of very pure love in Christ Jesus.

IF ONE COMES TO ME (Lk 14: 25-33)

Jesus came to give every man an offering of eternal life. It is up to man the will of accepting or rejecting it. If he rejects the offer that Jesus gives him, he remains in death today and moves towards eternal death. Man is already in death. Life is a gift of Christ Jesus. If he accepts the offer, he must sign the conditions. Man gives himself to Jesus for as long as he remains on earth; Christ Jesus, in his Holy Spirit, becomes divine life for man today and for blessed eternity. He will always be enveloped in his light, guarded in his truth, nourished with real life and transformed tomorrow into light, like today Christ is light. However, the conditions must be observed. All man offers himself to Christ and all Christ offers himself to man. The thought of Christ must govern the thought of man. Obedience to the Word of Christ must move the will of man. Today we have a Christian who claims without giving. He demands without compliance with the conditions. He already thinks he is in eternal life, while he is the slave of the prince of the world and of death. We choose Christ, observing his conditions.

by the theologian,

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