

Douala (Cameroon): life of the Apostolic Movement

The port city of Douala, with its 2,500,000 inhabitants, is the most populous urban center in Cameroon. Its strategic position on the shores of the Gulf of Guinea favours its role as the country's economic capital, a pole of attraction for businesses of great interest for the whole region of West Equatorial Africa.

At the same time, this relevance serves as a reason for attracting large sections of the population of small towns, which see the city as a place in which to hope for better living conditions. The result is an enormous expansion of poor peripheral neighborhoods, where misery and abandonment are concentrated. To this, serious tensions, also due to the strong presence of refugees from the neighboring Anglophone regions of the country, the scene of worrying ethnic and social conflicts must be added.

But the population of Douala as a whole shows itself to be active, eager not to surrender to the serious economic and social burdens that force it and open to building a more solid and sustainable future.

In this dynamic context, the Catholic Archdiocese, led by H.E. Msgr. Samuel Kleda, plays a role of reference for the whole population. Catholics are 21% of the population, but the local Church carries out an important service for all citizens, especially in the fields of schooling and university, health, commu-

nications and welfare services.

It is here that a group of adherents of the Apostolic Movement has been operating for about fifteen years. In 2007 its existence among the apostolate groups present in the diocese was recognized by a decree by the archbishop Card. Tumi, to which a decree of recognition by the National episcopal conference followed.

Today, an important point of reference for adhering members is the Chapel of the Saint Gerôme Catholic University Institute, where Fr. Gustave Mohomye takes care of their formation and supports their commitment in the church and in society. Regularly, the adherents meet for formation and the sacred Mass and organize voluntary activities and witness.

The next initiative, which Father Gustave wanted to organize with the convinced collaboration of the adhering members, is of strong charitable and social value: the visit to the large central prison in New Bell, for the fourth Sunday of Lent. This is not an easy operation. Fr. Gustave is taking care of all the necessary fulfillments to obtain access authorizations and organize a Eucharistic celebration with the detainees. And the adhering members of the Movement are working to bring them basic necessities. Preparations are underway in these days to collect rice, oil, milk, sugar, pasta, clothes, footwear... Therefore, the idea is to bring concrete signs of mercy for the spirit and the body, also making sure that the initiative is an opportunity for growth and training for the members themselves.

Therefore, Fr. Gustave and all the adherents of Douala invite the whole Apostolic Movement to join in prayer to the Mother of the Redemption for their mission, and for their part they express their affection and their prayers for the inspirer Maria Marino and all the adhering members in Italy and worldwide.



This is my Son, my beloved

Jesus is not the Son of God by adoption and not even by election or calling. He is Son for eternal generation. This truth is already contained in the Psalms: "I want to announce the decree of the Lord. He said to me: "You are my son, I begot you today" (Ps 2: 7). "To you the principality in the day of your power among holy splendours; from the breast of dawn, like dew, I begot you" (Ps 110 (109), 3). Through the Apostle John, the Holy Spirit reveals that the Son generated by the Father is the Word who became flesh and came to dwell among us full of grace and truth. He is the Only Son of God who came to reveal the Father to us in the fullness of his holiness, love, light, eternal life, forgiveness, mercy and will of salvation and redemption for every man. The faith of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church confesses that Jesus is "Light from Light, true God from true God, generated and not created, of the same substance as the Father". Jesus is the eternal Son of the Father who became flesh. He, who is the Creator and Lord of the whole universe, He who is God from eternity for eternity, became man for the redemption and salvation of every other man. Today the Father reveals who Jesus is: His Son, his Beloved, his Only Begotten and the Son of his love. He has placed his complacency in him.

Who is the Father well pleased of? Of who does his will. Scriptural texts in hand, we can confess that Jesus is the one who lives to do the will of the Father. The will of the Father is his food and his water. However, he does not do the will of the Father from his heart, from his wisdom and intelligence, but always from the eternal wi-

sdom and divine intelligence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' obedience is in the Holy Spirit. It is always full and perfect on earth and in the heavens, before his incarnation and after his glorious ascension to heaven. Jesus lives for the Father. He receives life from the Father, he gives life to the Father so that his eternal glory is manifested. He lives only to give glory to his Father, for his most high, true, full and perfect glorification. There has never been a single instant of eternity and never will be, never has there been a single instant of time, in which Christ Jesus was from his will. Satan tempted him, but Pharisees and scribes also tempted him so that he separated himself from the Father. But he visibly nailed himself to the will of the Father and also physically to the cross.

Being he is the only one who knows the will of the Father on his person, he is also the only one who can reveal it in fullness of truth. This is why he must be listened to. He does not speak from his heart and not even from the thoughts of men or their desires. He speaks from the heart and mind of the Father, from his Word and his will. Every word of men that contradicts the Word of Jesus is not worthy of being listened to. Peter, James and John, although they do not understand, now know that only Jesus has words of eternal life. He alone must be listened to. He alone is the true Word of God among men, because He is not only the true Word, but also the true fulfillment of every Word written for Him. Mother of the Redemption, arrange that we all listen to the Word of your Son.

Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno

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.Musolino, 23/E, Catanzaro.

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Printed by the press office of the Apostolic Movement

"MY EYES HAVE SEEN YOUR SALVATION"

Reflections starting from the homily of H.H. Francis
on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (01.02.2020)

Addressing the consecrated faithful, the Holy Father invites them to ask the Lord for "a new gaze, that knows how to see grace, look for the neighbor and to hope".

This is the point of arrival of a meditation inspired by the words of old Simeon, who, in the Jerusalem temple, recognizes the Christ of the Lord and sees the expectation that gives meaning to his whole life being fulfilled: "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation..." (Lk 2,29-30).

A gaze that knows how to see the grace. This is indeed a necessary condition to welcome the manifestation of God and respond to it docilely. "It is the starting point" - the Pope says. "When we keep our gaze fixed on him, we open ourselves to forgiveness that renews us and we are confirmed by his faithfulness. Today we can ask ourselves: "Whom do I direct my gaze to: the Lord or me?". Who first of all knows how to see the grace of God discovers the antidote to mistrust and worldly gaze" (Homily).

It seems a simple, elementary question, for the purpose of a sincere examination of conscience: "Whom do I direct my gaze to: the Lord or myself?" But for the answer to be right, a great sacrifice of the self is required. It is required that, even by directing my gaze to the Lord and his Word, I am not conditioned and limited by what I already intend to seek and find, based on my doctrine, my beliefs, my prejudices and objectives which I claim to have already identified with unquestionable certainty. In order for me to turn my gaze to the Lord with fidelity, I must always be ready to review my inter-

pretations of myself, of others, of history and of the Word of God itself. When the gaze is turned to the Lord, the first temptation to overcome is that of wanting to find in Him nothing more than confirmations to what has already been decided to make and to affirm or to the judgments that are not to be called into question. It is always easy to draw from the Word of the Lord or from his works only the elements and interpretations that best lend themselves to approving a truth that I am the one to want and to establish.

A gaze humbly turned to the Lord, always ready to changing the personal thoughts and certainties of judgment, is also capable of looking for the neighbour and seeing the grace that comes from him. If I look at the neighbour in the light of my prejudice, it will always be easy for me to restrict or unduly extend the meaning of his words and works, making him appear as an incorrigible opponent of the Lord and his Church. Instead, if I look with full availability for a humble and peaceful confrontation, then purification and enrichment will be reciprocal, precisely in view of a more docile conformity to the expectations of the Lord.

Without a glance humbly turned to the Lord, the prospect of hope is lost. Hope is not closed within the walls of my beliefs. Hope opens on hearts that know how to question themselves, before the Word of God and the signs of its action. Mother of Hope, Mother of Redemption, make us humble and fraternal, in the grateful contemplation of the grace and in the search for the neighbour.

Father Francesco Brancaccio

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

HIS FACE SHONE LIKE THE SUN
(2nd SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A)

I WILL MAKE YOU A GREAT NATION
AND I WILL BLESS YOU (Gen 12,1-4a)

With divine wisdom, the Lord, works in the history of man for the salvation of his creature, made by him in his image and likeness. It is the truth that must never be forgotten: God saves man through man. Redeemer and Saviour is the Lord, but without the work of man He does not save and does not redeem. With Noah he saved life on earth. With Abraham he wants his blessing to return to the heart of every man. How does man become an instrument of the blessing of his God? By obeying his voice, listening to his Word and executing every command. The Lord asks Abraham to come out of his land and Abraham obeys. Now the blessing passes through his life. It does not only pass through him, but also in him. All the families of the earth will be said blessed in you. How this blessing will be accomplished is not a yet revealed mystery. History will tell us that the blessing is in Christ, for Christ and with Christ.

BEAR YOUR SHARE OF HARDSHIP FOR
THE GOSPEL (2Tm 1,8b-10)

The salvation of the world, of every family on earth and of every people and nation, takes place through faith in Christ Jesus. However, Christ must be preached and proclaimed through the preaching and proclamation of his Gospel. Preaching and proclaiming the gospel is not enough. Every man must be invited to conversion and faith in the Gospel and in the conversion and repentance of sins committed, to be immersed in the waters of baptism and to be born again as new creatures from water and the Holy Spirit. Who must preach, announce, and explain the Gospel is the Apo-

stle of the Lord. It is also he who must baptize, forgive sins, nourish and aggregate to the Church by making all one body. It is He who must make the body of Christ to nourish the body of Christ. He will do this by engaging in a tough battle against the prince of the world which will cause him much pain and so much suffering. He will suffer and offer everything to God for conversion.

WITH WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; LISTEN TO HIM (Mt 17,1-9)

What must Jesus be listened in? In every Word that reveals his mystery, in which the mystery of every other one of his disciples is enclosed. Just as the mystery of Jesus the Lord is of death and resurrection, of annihilation and exaltation, so too the mystery of each of his disciples will be of glorious death and resurrection on the last day, of annihilation under the weight of obedience and exaltation in glory of the sky. Does Christ Jesus deserve to be heard? First of all, he deserves because he is guaranteed by the Father: "This is my Son, the beloved. In him I have placed my satisfaction". He is my Christ, my Messiah, my Suffering Servant and my persecuted Righteous. Secondly, he must be listened to because He passes through death on the cross and we too must pass through death on the cross. If he had been raised without humiliation he would not have been able to ask us for annihilation and the cross, to then be exalted. He asked and asks us, to live his mystery which is one, only one: it is a mystery of death and resurrection. Listening to us is imitation, true following.

by the theologian,
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