

From the seats - Catanzaro: The Apostolic Movement joyfully welcomes the Archbishop's Letter to ecclesial groups

"Joyful Apostles of the Resurrection": it is in the Easter atmosphere that the Archbishop of Catanzaro-Squillace, H.E. Vincenzo Bertolone, dedicated a confident pastoral note to lay aggregations.

The letter manifests itself as a strong and paternal sign of encouragement for all the associative realities of the diocese, so that they live with fidelity and communion the fervor of their apostolic action, in the fullness of their daily life.

Reconnecting to the recent conciliar and pontifical Magisterium, the Archbishop confidently exhorts every group to keep alive the freshness of the original charisma, respecting the freedom of people and pursuing internal and external communion with the whole Church, thus overcoming any risk of running in vain by unilateralism or by fragmentation with respect to parochial and diocesan communities.

A further sign of attention on the part of the Archbishop is the presentation text that he wished to dedicate to each of the aggregations operating in the diocese. The words addressed to the Apostolic Movement are also a clear and effective description.

At the end, Msgr. Bertolone proposes to all aggregations a sign of charity to be car-

ried out in communion, a work that the Movement has readily accepted, as you know from our social networks.

President Benedetto Caroleo, on behalf of the whole Apostolic Movement operating in the diocese, thanked the Archbishop, assuring him that, with the help of the assistants, we will treasure his indications, which instill encouragement make us further feel his presence as Pastor, his trust and his commitment to always direct the ecclesial path of all our associative realities in truth and charity.

"We welcome with trepidation your invitation to be "joyful apostles of the Resurrection" - the president writes - with the dynamism that has driven the nascent Church from the empty sepulchre, in fidelity to the charisma aroused by the Spirit and always brought back to the discernment of the Pastors and to the ecclesial communion, certain that in this way we will not find ourselves running in vain, we will watch over every unilateralism and continue to commit ourselves to a full and vital insertion in the heart of the parish communities and in the life of the diocese".

In the letter, the Archbishop also mentions a work of charity, "which reminds everyone of the great beauty of the Christian life", also proposed to the collaboration of the aggregations. The Apostolic Movement also enthusiastically accepted the invitation, involving immediately all the adhering members.

The full text of the pastoral note "Joyful Apostles of the Resurrection" is also available on the web organ of the Calabrian Episcopal Conference, www.calabriaecclesia.org.

Concetta Silipo, diocesan secretary



Jesus "Good Shepherd" and "Door of the flock"

The 4th Easter Sunday, called "the Good Shepherd Sunday", also coincides with the 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Jesus applies to himself two significant images that complement each other: the Good Shepherd and sheepfold door images: "Whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep" (Jn 10: 1).

The former image, the one of the Good Shepherd, stands out clearly throughout the Gospel, through the teaching of Jesus, his actions and words, in which there is a power of grace capable of persuading people to the wonder of his authority and adherence of faith in him. For the many people who choose to follow him, a movement of the axis is noted, as a sort of spiritual transhumance, for which the meek flock feels the desire of conversion, of travelling new lands, of letting be led to grassy and safe pastures by the Good Shepherd and of finding refreshment and fullness of life (cf Ps 22).

Even today, the Good Shepherd theme brings to mind specifically, the role of the Pastors of the Church, called to be sure guides and points of reference for the flock entrusted to them. It is a high and grave responsibility, which the apostle Peter, reminding the image of the Good Shepherd, already recommended: "Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly" (1Pt 5,2). In the Old Testament the Lord, using the prophets, firmly reprimanded the shepherds who had not taken care of their flock, thus denouncing their neglect (cf Jer 50.6; Zec 11.16-17).

Fulfilling loyally their ministry, Pastors must

learn from Christ - always obedient to the will of his Father - knowing how to be docile to the will of God. Being Pastors according to the heart of Christ, means learning constantly to acquire knowledge and virtues; and listening to God in prayer, so that the entire life is always at the service of the Gospel. It is through the Shepherds that believers can feel the impetus of attraction to Christ, and it is only in Jesus that they will be able to find the deep reasons for responding, "with gratitude", to a specific vocation (Pope Francis, 3 May 2020).

The Good Shepherd image becomes more plastic with the latter simile, that of the sheepfold "door": "I am the door of the sheep". Jesus is the shepherd who does not only guard the sheepfold, but is simultaneously the door of salvation. Those who want to enter the fence through the window or elsewhere are "thieves or robbers".

There is a Christ belonging reference in these words. The sheepfold represents the Church, his Bride and his Body. Belonging to the flock of Christ is accomplished by "entering" into him. It is not only a question of baptismal action, whose sacrament makes us partakers of divine life, but of an entire existence to be lived in conformity with the Gospel's word of truth. Faith is not based on arbitrary ideas or personal opinions, but on the acceptance of the teaching of the Church, recognizing in her the very voice of Christ who speaks to the world through his Pastors.

May the Mother of the Redemption make us Christians docile to the Gospel listening and authentic witnesses of the charity of Christ the Good Shepherd.

Father Alessandro Carioti

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.

Internet: www.movimentoapostolico.it
e-mail: info@movimentoapostolico.it

Printed by the press office of the Apostolic Movement

"The hope of Jesus is different"

Reflections starting from the Homily of H.H. Francis
in the Easter Vigil (11.4.2020)

In the homily, Pope Francis updates the Gospel story with the eyes of faith. His reading is not only a reminder of the narrative, but today it must produce in the hearts of the faithful the same hope and joy the disciples of the time experienced.

On that day, the women "like us, had the tragedy of suffering in their eyes (...). They had seen death and had death in their hearts." The Saturday had passed with the thought turned at the crucified dead Master, to whom a worthy burial had to be given. The women let not themselves be paralyzed by fear and despair, but moved by love for the Master prepare the oils to anoint Jesus' body for burial. At dawn they went to the sepulchre. There, the angel said to them: "Do not be afraid. He is not here, he is risen (...). And then they meet Jesus, the author of hope, who confirms the announcement and says: "Have no fear". Do not be afraid, do not be frightened: here is the announcement of hope. It is for us today. Today. These are the words that God repeats us on the night we are going through".

The Pope comments, true hope is not something that can vanish. It is a gift from God and it is different than human hope, which, with passing of days and growing fears, risks to evaporate. "The hope of Jesus is different. It puts into the heart the certainty that God knows how to turn everything to good, because he makes life come out even from the grave". - Pope Francis continues, this hope must also illuminate the dark moments of our life. So

let us not be taken by resignation, but on the contrary, with the light of faith, we know that God is faithful and does not abandon. "His light illuminated the darkness of the tomb: today it wants to reach the darkest corners of life (...). Darkness and death don't have the last word. Be courageous, with God nothing is lost!"

Another point Pope Francis highlights is that of courage. Jesus invites to have courage. One could object: "But I have no courage!". It is true - the Pope continues - "You cannot give it to yourself, but you can receive it, as a gift. Just open your heart in prayer, it suffices to lift that stone placed at the mouth of your heart a little to let the light of Jesus in. It suffices to invite him: "Come, Jesus, into my fears and say to me too: Be courageous!"

Jesus wants this hope to be for everyone and sends the women: "Go and announce my brothers to go to Galilee".

The homily ends with the hope, which becomes also a warning of change, of "passing/Easter": change of behavior, from death to life. "How nice it is being Christians who console, announcers of life in time of death! Let's silence the death cries, no more wars! Stop the production and trade of weapons, for we need bread and not rifles. Let abortions that kill innocent life stop. Open the hearts of those who have, to fill the empty hands of those who are deprived of the necessary".

Mother of Christ, obtain a true Easter for us.

Father Vincenzo Moniaci

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

I AM THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP
(IV Easter Sunday Year A)

WHAT ARE WE TO DO, MY BROTHERS?
(Acts 2,14a.36-41)

Announcement of Jesus and explicit invitation to believe in Him are inseparable. Those who are touched by the Holy Spirit, listen to the Word of Peter on Crucified and Risen Christ and ask, "What should we do, brothers?" Peter's response is immediate: "Get converted and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Spirit." Preaching, explicit invitation to faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, conversion, sacraments must be one thing. The reception of Christ truth and grace is the end of the Church's preaching and mission. As it is the primary purpose to build the body of Christ with the addition of new baptized. The Church is the necessary way for salvation. Preaching a true salvation outside the body of Christ is against the truth of the Church, sent into the world to make disciples of Jesus of all peoples, making them Christ's body.

TO THE SHEPHERD AND GUARDIAN
OF YOUR SOULS (1Pt 2,20b-25)

The Christian has only one mission to do: looking at Christ and shaping his own life according to his style. Christ is the Suffering Servant, the Crucified, the One who has taken upon himself all the sins and the punishments of men to expiate them in his body. Even the disciple must become a suffering servant in Christ. He must be able to withstand all injustice, iniquity, offense and deprivation of every right. He must never know evil. He must only think about loving, letting himself be crucified by all the injustices of the world. The Christian

must be formed at the school of his cross, because it is on the cross that Jesus revealed all the power of his love when he asked the Father to forgive his crucifiers. A sheep that follows the Shepherd that expiates the world's sin must also want to expiate sins. That is why he must "get used to" every insult, spit, slander, injustice, arrogance and offence for the name of Jesus the Lord.

THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT
MORE ABUNDANTLY (Jn 10,1-10)

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the life of the sheep. He gives his life by atoning for their sin and sending the Holy Spirit to give to those who believe in him, in the waters of Baptism, supernatural and eternal life, making him son of the Father, elevating him to the highest dignity of his true body. He also gives life really, substantially, truly, by offering his flesh to be eaten and its blood to be drunk. In this he is the true Easter Lamb. However, he is not the Lamb that is eaten only at Easter during the celebration of the Supper, but he is consumed every day, even several times a day, to carry out the journey to eternal glory in the skies of God the Father. There is nothing missing in the life of Christ the Lord. It is humanly and divinely full and perfect. If a disciple of Jesus does not reach the eternal kingdom or does not pass from sin to grace for all the days of his life, responsibility is his only. God, by giving us Christ, Christ, by giving us the Holy Spirit and eternal life, the Spirit, by giving us himself, Christ Jesus and the Father, have nothing more to give. They have given everything.

by the theologian,
Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno