

"SERVANTS AND CUSTODIANS OF HUMAN LIFE"

A doctor's testimony

Each person is a gift, a value to be welcomed, guarded and protected. Each person has a history, a life experience to be respected. Over time I learned that the patient cannot be identified in his infirmity. Being a doctor does not only mean taking care of physical health but being able to put yourself in the shoes of the other, in the mystery of his illness, in the fear and discomfort that it causes, while remaining lucid, oriented and above all capable of bringing healing and relief. Who is more fragile than a new born baby? What joy is greater for a family than to welcome a nascent life?

Faith helped me to hope against all hope, to commit myself to the health of tender lives, it taught me to see the greatness of the Father in their eyes. Even today, after many years, I am moved by the miracle of life that is born and struggles with all its strength for healing. The years of my formation have been years of spiritual journey in

the womb of the Apostolic Movement. Respect and love for brothers and sisters, the joy of offering oneself unconditionally to others and working in communion with the Church, has allowed me to grow as a person and as a doctor. The example of the Inspirer Maria Marino who dedicated and still dedicates her life to the mission that the Lord has entrusted her, continues to motivate me by encouraging me to go on despite tiredness, frustrations and helplessness in the face of illness and death.

Each of us has a vocation, a mission that God has entrusted to us and giving it a voice fills me with joy, aware that this requires commitment, study, dedication but also a lot of empathy and love. I thank God for having called me to take care of these more fragile children of his. I thank him even when illness and despair seem to have the upper hand. In those moments I entrust everything to him trying to be a useful tool in his hands. I make my own the exhortation of John Paul II who, in the *Evangelium Vitae*, invited doctors and all health workers to be servants and custodians of human life. I entrust my life to the Mother of the Redemption so that she grants me to be a docile instrument of healing and comfort, always remaining in the joy of my vocation.

Dr. Immacolata Guzzo
Neonatologist pediatrician

Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it

St. Matthew (10: 37-42) reports the contents of the radical discipleship based on love for Jesus the Lord, which is at the origin and foundation of the very main human loves that God himself commanded for a father, mother and neighbour, to be loved as the personal self. Therefore, loving Jesus, more than parents or children means laying such a strong and absolute foundation on human loves that, even if these can be put in crisis, they remain firm, because they share in the same love of God.

Today - as in the past, in which loves have often the duration of an emotion or an adventure - giving the testimony of a faithful, free and total love is possible only by the love that God pours into the hearts of those who live the "sequel of Christi" and who - for the same reason - become announcers of the Gospel with their lives.

However, loving Jesus above all things is not always easy for his "disciples"; difficulties often begin with the family of origin. And even if the "disciple" is not invited to disrupt the family, however, if the latter refuses to accept his conversion, if it imposes on him a choice between faith and blood ties, then the "disciple" must know how to discern which the main thing, for himself but also for the world, is. And there can be no doubt: it is the love of Jesus.

With his redemptive incarnation Jesus began a new world that builds new relationships between God, man and creation that transcend the present time and reach eternity. Therefore loving Jesus above all

else must not seem like a selfish request or a sort of rivalry between Jesus and human and family affections. Whoever does not follow Jesus makes his death and redemption vain and therefore he is not worthy of Him who is the "Author and Source of love". Jesus himself reiterates this with a triple repetition: "he is not worthy of me": what is really worthy and elevated? Finding or losing life?

A clarification should be made here to avoid the bitter misunderstanding it is so easy to fall in: here we do not intend to oppose earthly life to eternal life as if they were two lives (now and, perhaps, after death); life is one and only one, even if it develops in different phases: in its earthly phase, with the troubled witness given to the Gospel, but already in union with the life of Christ, and then eternity. Therefore, who wants to "enjoy life", at the price of his Christian vocation and of the burdens it entails, estranging himself from the problems of the world and beyond the horizon of the Kingdom of God, will realize not having given value to his life, but having shrunk and even destroyed it, taking it away from eternal life. Instead, whoever will have accepted the gift of God and lived in communion with the sufferings of Jesus will find himself - whatever he has had to suffer - as having achieved it.

Virgin Mary, obtain for us the grace of a new heart that knows how to welcome the love that Jesus the Lord wants to pour into it in order to be spread into the Church and the world of human and family relationships.

Father Antonio Fiozzo

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"DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME"

Reflections starting from the Homily of H.H. Francis
on the Solemnity of Corpus Domini (14.6.2020)

Pope Francis centres his homily on memory. "Remember all the way that the Lord, your God, has made you run through" (Dt 8,2). Memory is not a private thing, it is the way that unites us to God and to others. But if this memory or the faith transmission chain is interrupted - either because the oral story is no longer there, or because after reading the Bible we don't remember, or because the listener, having not gained experienced of those events, forgets them - then, how might the new generations know and accept the gift of God?

"He left us a Bread in which there is He, alive and true, with all the flavour of his love. Receiving it we can say: 'He is the Lord, he remembers me!'. Therefore Jesus asked us: 'Do this in remembrance of me' (1 Cor 11:24). Do: the Eucharist is not a simple remembrance, it is a fact: it is the Easter of the Lord that is lived again for us. In Mass celebration the death and resurrection of Jesus are before us. Do this in remembrance of me: get together and as a community, as a people, as a family, celebrate the Eucharist to remember me. We cannot do without it, it is the memorial of God. It heals our wounded memory." "Do this in remembrance of me": in every Eucharist, Jesus becomes a memorial, that is the reality, here, at this moment, now.

Memorial means that those who participate are aware that what is being celebrated, what is being participated in, is not mere memory, repetition of a gesture, of a ritual, but here, now, what the "memory" brings with itself is being updated. Therefore, not only is the celebration real, but my participation must be real and also my

will to adhere with all myself to what is being celebrated. You participate in the celebration with the desire of receiving the fruit of the celebration. Every Mass is this "do....". Not only in doing we obey a command, but we bring up to date here what Jesus wanted to do at the Last Supper.

Why is the Eucharist vital for us faithful? Pope Francis explains: it has the ability to heal our spirit. When we receive the Eucharist well prepared, or in the right disposition, conscious and aware of who we are going to receive and what we receive him for, then the Holy Spirit's love comforts us, because he never leaves us alone and heals our wounds.

With the Eucharist, the Lord also heals our negative memory, that is, the negativity that stagnates in our hearts, the residue of bad experiences, which have left their mark and then turn into fear, insecurity, sometimes sadness and even spiritual inertia. The strength of the Eucharist heals this heart negativity and transforms us into bearers of God: bearers of joy, because they know they are people loved by God.

The homily ends with an invitation to make the Eucharist bear fruit in us. The strength, love and energy that the Eucharist has given us must be transformed into a service of love for God and our neighbour.

Virgin Mary, give us the gift of knowing how to fall in love with the Eucharist, in that, with the faith in it we believe it is the very Jesus that in the Gift of himself loved, saved and redeemed us.

Father Vincenzo Moniaci

The
Lord's Day
ROMAN RITE

WHOEVER RECEIVES YOU RECEIVES ME
(XIII Sunday O.T. Year A)

CAN SOMETHING BE DONE FOR HER?
(2Kings 4.8-11.14-16a)

A woman recognizes Elisha as God's true man. She thinks of doing him some good and for this she prepares him a furnished room of essential things so that he can, going through there, retreat and rest. Elisha wants to reward the woman. However, not as a simple man, but as a true prophet of God. Not having the woman son, Elisha promises her that in a year, at the same date, she would have a baby in her arms. Thus Elisha teaches us that the man of God must always "get out of debt" as a man of God. This rule has also been lived by Jesus. It is also true for his apostles and ministers of the Word. They receive a material good, but they must always answer as true men of God. If they answer as men of the world, they testify that they are not men of God. Everyone can give matter. Only them, men of God, can give the spiritual or also the material gift in God's way. If they do not give it, God is not manifested for them.

THINK OF YOURSELVES AS (BEING)
DEAD TO SIN (Rm 6,3-4,8-11)

Saint Paul sees the immersion in the waters of baptism as true death to sin and the ascent from them as true resurrection. The Christian is the one who, having died to sin, flesh and the world, lives in the Holy Spirit for truth, light, grace and justice according to God. Who returns to the flesh dies to the Spirit. Who lives under the regime of evil might certainly does not live in the regime of the Spirit. No one might ever live under the flesh, slave of sin and under the rule of the Holy Spirit, free from all sin and injustice. Flesh and Spirit, justice and injustice, sin and grace cannot live in the same per-

son. Either we make the Spirit reign or otherwise flesh and sin will reign. If the Spirit governs, we walk from light to light until reaching eternal light. If we make the flesh reign, we will advance from darkness to darkness until falling into everlasting darkness.

WHO RECEIVES A PROPHET BECAUSE HE IS A PROPHET (Mt 10: 37-42)

Jesus sends his disciples to the world asking for a firm, convinced and strong faith in his Father who takes care of the birds of the air and dresses the field lilies. He also reassures all those who will do good to their missionaries. He will give them the same reward as to prophets. These live in the blessing of the Lord and those who welcome them will live in the Lord's blessing. Tomorrow they will be welcomed in the eternal dwellings and even those who help them will be welcomed into the eternal dwellings. If the missionary falls from this faith, he will be dedicated to solving his problems, but without ever concluding anything. God has taken away this ability from him. He deprived him of all intelligence for the things of the earth. He must devote himself only to the things of God. Even whoever welcomes must have this faith if he wants to solve his many problems. Profit is very high for whoever welcomes and for who lets himself be welcomed. In disbelief, harm is enormous for either the former and the latter and also for the Lord. The Lord cannot do the Lord, if the missionary does not do the missionary and if the welcoming host does not do the welcome.

by the theologian,
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