**Year XXXIV n. 12 June 04, 2017**

**I have kept silence**

In the history of the Lord's people there are times when God seems to be absent. In these moments, the forces of evil beat down, showing all their power of destruction, devastation and iniquity. Then again He looks out of heaven and manifests himself as light, truth, life, holiness, blessing and peace. After the death of Joseph, God is silent for about four hundred years. From a free people, Israel became a people of slaves, caged by the shameless, foolish, calculating politics of the King of Egypt. When suffering has come to its limit, the Lord manifests himself and the hope is revived in the people.

In Egypt slavery was the fruit of the arrogant foolishness of Pharaoh and his calculations of iniquitous and deceptive military strategy. In Babylon slavery was a consequence of the idolatry and universal immorality of the children of Israel. For seventy years the Lord seems to be silent. If He is silent there is no salvation for humanity. Here is his decision to his people in exile: "*I have looked away, and kept silence, I have said nothing, holding myself in; But now, I cry out as a woman in labour, gasping and panting. I will lay waste mountains and hills, all their herbage I will dry up; I will turn the rivers into marshes, and the marshes I will dry up. I will lead the blind on their journey; by paths unknown I will guide them. I will turn darkness into light before them, and make crooked ways straight. These things I do for them, and I will not forsake them*" (cf. Is. 42: 1-25).

When the Lord is silent, still, he seems closed in his heaven, even if he is always present on our land, what must man do? Shouting, shouting loudly, with a stronger and more powerful voice so that he comes down and takes history in hand. This is always gone crazy, advancing on foolish and bumpy ways, walks wrapped in every idolatry and immorality and is consumed in real dementia decisions. Only the Lord has its government. Only He can straighten it and put it back on the right path. Only He can enliven it, illuminating it with eternal light and feeding it with divine life. God comes down, but man also must ask for it. God wants him to become aware of his uselessness for the change of his life. Without this realization, his intervention in history could turn out to be vain.

Talking to a proud, immoral, idolater, unconscious, self-confident man who only believes in his foolish science, material resources, human and earthly alliances is a waste of time. When the man is without conscience, discernment and any light of truth, to be able to speak effectively, God must first create the conditions that are suffering, pain, poverty, misery, loss of freedom and all other privation. Man must experience his non power, non strength and non ability. He must experience that his science does not save him, his money does not give him life and progress does not make him grow in humanity. All these things imprison him in an even greater slavery.

Science, progress, technology, inventions and discoveries are for man like the coils of a snake constrictor. The more the coils become strong and powerful and the more choking gets faster. That's what's happening nowadays. Our progress, considered the source of life, is becoming the most powerful tool of death. The society of the most advanced progress is moving towards its total suffocation. It is incapable of conceiving the very life of the body. So progress for life has become progress for death, its own self-destruction. Powerful coils are crushing society without this even being aware because it is narcotized by its vices, immorality, idolatry, selfishness and total consecration to sin.

But man does not want to realize that the slavery of death and self-destruction is now his only reason to exist and to operate. He must be helped. By who? Who should help him wake up, so that he begins his cry to the God who alone is his salvation, has become a false prophet. He is also under the influence of the powerful narcotics of our current progress of death and eradication of our once Christian civilization. It is necessary to react. But we, false prophets, lack the true breath, the breath of the Holy Spirit, that must come out with power from our heart, to seek help from the Lord.

When ordinary ways are no longer sufficient, it is necessary for the Lord to look up himself from Heaven. Nowadays, it is one of these moments. The Virgin Mary looked up and asked for the human way of reminding the Word, to be resumed. But who today believes in this desire and will of the Mother of God? Are few people enough to awaken man? Perhaps then the time has come for the believer to awaken the Lord, but he can awaken him only after having done all that has been asked of him. So while the believer performs his work, seeing his inefficiency and sobriety, he has to cry to God so that he is manifested with all his power and works more wonders to awaken men to his powerful truth and light.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, make yourself voice of this humanity on the way to destruction. You will cry for us. Jesus your Son will listen to you. He will cry to the Father. The Father will intervene for our liberation from these powerful spirals of death. Holy Mother, remember that we are from your prayer.

***Father Costantino Di Bruno***

**Faith and secularism: an alliance for civil coexistence**

Reflections from the discourse of H.H. Francis to the Authorities in Egypt (28.4.2017)

In some circumstances, Pope Francis has dealt with the theme of the role of faith in the context of secular societies. On the plot of this delicate and vital balance in particular he structured his messages to Europe. But some accents also resound in Egypt, in his words spoken to the secular authorities, almost to recall that the theme of the relationship between religions and civil society, between the protection of liberties and the prevention of extremisms, is today a matter on which the arrangement of global peace and civic coexistence depend.

To Egypt and the world, the pope reaffirms a principle which, in the simplicity of its formulation, appears crystal-clear, self-evident and peaceful: *"One can believe and live in harmony with others, sharing with them the fundamental human values ​​and respecting the freedom and faith of all"* (Address to Authorities). This principle, which seems to be deeply linked to the difficult reorganization of social equilibrium in the Europe of immigration and populism, of terrorist threats and walls, is repeated by the pope rather drawing it from the motto of the Egyptian state: *"Egypt, which in the same time builds peace and fights terrorism, is called upon to prove that "... faith is for God, the homeland is for everyone""*. This reference from the sources of the Arab state suggests that coexistence in a single homeland of different religious experiences is not an exclusive requirement of the European context. This is a requirement embodied in the most natural dimension of human sociality and therefore capable, at least in theory, of being brought to consciousness and sought out as a value in all cultures and religious experiences.

The confidence that different beliefs can coexist in one country on the basis of shared human values ​​and in respect for mutual freedoms is an already precious first step in itself, but it is only a beginning of the relationship between faith and secularism. Christian thought has in its very essence the prerequisites for raising this basic trust to even more encouraging awareness. In Christian culture, the relationship between faith and secularism is not conceivable in itself as a contrast or competition, but as a necessary and reciprocal gratitude. Let's see on what foundation this belief is based. Let us try to understand why Christianity on its part requires and encourages secularism.

We begin with the assumption that Christianity is properly the "Logos" religion (this is not a definitive definition, but a presupposition to keep in mind). The "Logos" is God's creative Reason, it is uncreated Wisdom, it is the Word made flesh. God acts "with Logos", according to reason - Benedict XVI in his well-known speech of Regensburg recalled. Therefore, God's plan is not purely arbitrary, it is loaded with meaning and, as such, with the help of his Spirit, can be known and understood in history. In his Word, God places in creation and history the imprint of his wisdom. Therefore, in nature and history, it is possible to trace what corresponds to the sense, good, beauty and justice, sensibly and wisely placed by God. Human reason as such is questioned by this effort.

That is why Christianity not only "admits" or "accepts" secularism, but more properly "requires" and "encourages" it: when Christians deal with moral, ethical, and legal norms, they do so through the effort of reason, they seek the reasons inscribed in the nature of man, for which a norm is good and sensible. Obviously they do so in the light of faith, but through reason.

This means that Christianity cannot impose on society a norm based on theocratic or dogmatic assumptions, but rather has to offer motivated reasons to public debate. This does not mean at all that the Christian must intervene in the ethical and legislative debate by putting aside his faith, but by being committed so that the faith supports and enlightens his reasoning and leads to arguments supported by categories common to the lay context. They might and might not be accepted, by assuming one their intellectual and moral responsibility, but they are reasons, and as such they cannot be silenced even before they are expressed.

It is sometimes argued that believers must offer their contribution as citizens and not as believers. But how can this happen? Whoever acts within the realm of citizenship is the human person, and the person is a unitary, not dichotomous subject. The person is indivisible, he might never be divided into two thoughts, two identities and two ways of being. The Christian is a citizen and the citizen can be a Christian, as well as he can belong to different categories of which he is not invited to be deprived: artist, reader, worker, an individual endowed with a political idea, a regional belonging, a professional specialization and a cultural identity. Thus, the citizen identified by the Christian faith will bring about the contribution of his faith and all his personal particularities in the effort to contribute rationally and secularly to the life of society and institutions. Preventing him from intervening as a Christian in public and even legislative debate would mean repressing a significant contribution of reason, the contribution of the reasons offered according to the experience and the wisdom of faith. It would be a prejudicial or totalitarian operation, a contradiction to the very idea of ​​secularism, a contradiction to human reason.

Therefore, in our multicultural world, secularism must be rethought as a common space and not as a separating frontier. A common space marked by essential and shared reference points that allow to live together. A non-vengeful, nor exclusive secularity, understood not as an end in itself, but as the instrument that makes everyone’s contribution possible in the "common home" in the name of at least the dignity of the person. It is the idea of ​​secularism that transpires from Pope Francis' magisterium, being manifested with particular clarity in the encyclical "Laudato si, (Be praised)" "and in all the speeches to Europe.

If secularism is not an excluding frontier, this does not mean that it does not have to put barriers. By designing a common space of shared civil rules aimed at the dignity of the person, secularism consists in the limit placed on the arbitrary nature of individualisms and to the arrogance of fundamentalisms and radicalisms, so that everyone can exercise the freedom to participate in a responsible and reasonable manner to the construction of the common house.

In this effort, the Christian refers to the Gospel, lets himself be led by the Spirit, invokes the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Redemption, without imposing the foundations and outcomes of his own faith, but reasonably witnessing it with charity and with the gift of life.

***Father Francesco Brancaccio***

**AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU**

**(Sunday of Pentecost Year A)**

**THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (At 2,1-11)**

The Church lives with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of Christ and his body. How can the Church be able to make him fruitful by adding Spirit to Spirit? Imitating Jesus Christ. By becoming obedient to Christ in all His Word, Commandment and desire. Always living in Christ and for Christ. Without this constant commitment, the Spirit is extinguished and the body becomes poor of Him and cannot accomplish the mission of salvation that has been entrusted to him. Every disciple of Jesus receives a flame of light, fire, truth, charity, wisdom of the Holy Spirit. This flame must be united to all other flames. It must always grow, never diminish and always increase. Every disciple is called to nourish the flame of the Spirit until making it becomes a very intense light. It is the mission of every Christian. Everything else will be the fruit of this flame that burns the world of love, truth, light, holiness, obedience, faith and charity for our Lord Jesus.

**THE SAME SPIRIT (1Cor 12,3b-7.12-13)**

Every charisma gives life to the body, but also receives it from the body. Without the body the charisma is dead, because it is lifeless. The Spirit bestows his gifts according to his eternal inscrutable counsel, subjected neither to our judgment nor to our insane and foolish discernment. He gives to whomever he wants, according to measure, quality and quantity that He chooses. It is not the gift that makes a person great before God. A pope is not great with God because he is a Pope and a priest is less important because he is a priest. Every disciple is great before God in so far as he makes his gift fruit to the benefit and profit of the whole body. Every gift is equal to every other gift, because all gifts come from the Spirit. We have the obligation to give full life to them always in the Holy Spirit. If we enter in the judgment of the Spirit, we are seriously sinning of non respect and non honour in his regard. Our true glory is to do what the Spirit asks us to do.

**RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT (Jn 20: 19-23)**

Without the Spirit of the Lord there is no mission of salvation. The light, strength, intelligence, counsel and science that come only from Him are lacking. God and Christ Jesus carry out everything in the Spirit. The disciples can accomplish the mission of grace and truth only if they are filled with the Holy Spirit. If they turn off the Spirit, everything in them goes out. Without the Holy Spirit, communion with the will of the Father fails. We do things that come from us and no longer from God. Without the Paraclete, even if we realize something on the style of Christ, we do it on an old, ancient model of the past. The Holy Spirit always offers us the form and the essence of today's Christ. This is the Christian's mistake. Since without the Spirit of the Lord, he imitates the Christ of yesterday, no longer present and ignores the Christ of today, the only Christ who can give a new face to both the Church and humanity. Whoever wants to give an always new face to Christ just as Christ has given the very new face of the Father, he must always be filled with the Holy Spirit and grow in Him for all the days of his life.

**GOD HAS LOVED THE WORLD**

**(Most Holy Trinity Year A)**

**O LORD, DO COME ALONG IN OUR COMPANY (Ex 34: 4b-6.8-9)**

Moses is a man of great experience. In his life, he saw that from the first moment of his vocation, the path to the liberation of his people was full of pitfalls and obstacles. Only the Lord could bend the Pharaoh, open the Sea, make water pour out of the rock and make the manna drop from the sky. Now the Lord says to Moses: *"With this people I will no longer walk. I put it in your hands. You see to it!"* Moses responds to the Lord from his rich experience: *"If you do not walk with us, you are not going anywhere. Without you there is no way neither long nor short. There is no future. Without you everything is over at this moment!"* How much do we pray for our experience and history? How much consciousness have we that our life has been all of his work? If we have not had any experience of the presence of God in our past and present existence, we cannot pray.

**THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (2 Cor 13: 11-13)**

Love is the Father’s. However, God cannot love man. He must transform it first into grace of salvation and redemption. Christ receives all the love of the Father and transforms it all into grace, truth, justice, light, holiness, mercy, compassion, redemption and salvation. But even Christ cannot give grace to the children of men. This mission is of the Holy Spirit. It is He who has to put us in communion with the grace of Christ in order to be overwhelmed by the love of the Father. Salvation and redemption are the work of the Blessed Trinity. The three Divine Persons do not act autonomously and divided. The Father cannot love without the grace of Christ. Christ cannot love us without the communion of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot love us without the love of the Father and the grace of Christ Jesus. So it must also be in the body of Christ: everyone can love only from the Spirit that is in others, in every other and in all others.

**IN THE NAME OF THE ONLY SON OF GOD (Jn 3: 16-18)**

Man is in death from the time of Satan's listening. To heal him from the lethal bite, the Father gives him, for his great love, his Only Son. However, there is a condition to be observed. Not only Jesus must be viewed as the one and only way of salvation, but also as the only one that has words of eternal life, lending all obedience to his Gospel according to the way that the same Gospel commands us. Salvation is for those who look to Christ and believe in his name, the name of truth, justice, holiness, love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness and not request for vengeance or justice. One looks at Christ, believes in his name, welcomes his Word as the true eternal life for us, he walks in the Gospel, runs through the path of light and enters into salvation. Today, a great heresy is likely to destroy the entire Church building. We want salvation for everyone, Christ is proclaimed the Redeemer of all, but without any faith in His Word, from which his eternal redemption comes to us. Instead, salvation is only in Him. We are in Him if we dwell in His Word.

**CATANZARO - 9th International Convention of the Apostolic Movement**

"The Church listens to and accompanies young people in the change of era. "A better world is also built up thanks to you" (Pope Francis)": this is the theme of the 9th International Convention of the Apostolic Movement that on May 9, in the "Palagiovino" of Catanzaro, saw as speakers H. Em. Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, who offered a reflection on "Young People, Faith and Vocation Discernment"; and Dr. Nicola Gratteri, Director of Public Prosecutions in Catanzaro, who spoke on the topic: "Young people and society: interpreting discomfort and motivating hopes".

The works, moderated by Fr. Francesco Brancaccio, ecclesiastical diocesan assistant of the Apostolic Movement, were introduced by the choir's singing guided by Fr. Francesco Bruno, and by Antonio Afeltra who gave the speakers the expectations and hopes of young people (...).

After the greeting of the movement, Cesare Rotundo (...), it was up to the Metropolitan Archbishop of Catanzaro-Squillace, H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Bertolone, President of the CEC, to give a reading key to the theme, expressing a warm welcome to Cardinal Baldisseri, to civil and religious authorities, to the conventioneers that arrived from Italy and abroad, to the founder and inspirer of the Apostolic Movement, Maria Marino and to Mons. Costantino Di Bruno, the central ecclesiastical assistant.

"The Church – Monsignor Bertolone said to young people - wants to get close to you, to listen and accompany you. We all feel the need to be reminded us that a better world is possible not "by magic" but by love, towards the many young people who have the desire of putting on their way, of spending their lives for others, of thinking and drawing horizons ff beauty, as Pope Francis tells us. It should be a relay between adults and young people to make life full of sense and opportunity." Monsignor Bertolone has delivered three words to the young: "authenticity," "amazement," and "passion", with a clear invitation of being responsible and authentic of their own choices, with the capability of letting themselves be surprised and with the passion that makes them alive and committed (...).

Cardinal Baldisseri presented in great detail the preparatory document of the next synodal assembly that will be held in October 2018, and that will have as its theme "Young people, faith and vocational discernment".

The Cardinal, recalling the Pope's thought said, "The Church desires to enable every young person to become aware that "I am a mission on this earth and that is why I am in this world": from here starts the need to shed light on the own specific vocation, through discernment and through accompaniment, which have the task of creating the right conditions so that every young man can respond with joy and generosity to the divine appeal" (...)

State Prosecutor Gratteri has passed on to the young people his magistrate experience, drawing a descriptive picture of our time, too often marked by the crisis of values ​​and the lack of planning due also to a little cultural formation.

For the magistrate you cannot use or manipulate young people, but you need to speak their language to stimulate them to responsibility, seeking the common good and the beauty of the taste.

For Prosecutor Gratteri, liberalization of drugs is and will always be an immoral case, since a state cannot think of making harmful substances accessible to its citizens (...).

At the end of the day Cardinal Baldisseri, known for his expertise as a musician and composer, offered all a piano performance with a "Track" of famous songs.

(Taken from www.calabriaecclesia.org)

**IDOLATRY...**

The Lord

asks for your conversion,

man.

For the brothers to be converted,

you must model yourself on Christ

and follow his example of humility and obedience.

If his feelings of peace and truth,

reign in you

you build the Church.

Do not excuse yourself and do not say, "The flesh is weak."

Prayer and sacraments

move you away from scandal.

Do not allow

your brother to fall into sin.

Look up to heaven and ponder:

"One day for me too

the sun will darken and the light will not shine again.

My power and my wealth,

my pride and my vanity

will disappear into nothingness.

If I will not have been converted,

I will perish in darkness for eternity".

Fear the righteous judgment of God,

man,

and do not think that the Lord,

good and merciful,

also justifies evil.

He forgives the sinner,

that gets converted,

that returns to the fold,

that abandons the road

of injustice and iniquity.

Man, in the realm of darkness in which you live,

too many scandals,

too many abominations and villainies are committed;

orgies and false prophecies rage,

individuals live as iniquitous men,

it is perjured with great ease,

the people of God is taught in ignorance and in heresy.

These are severe sins

that offend the Lord our God.

Idolatry is by now a universal religion.

Man,

go back to the fold, be reconciled with your God

and he will be reconciled with you.

***Maria Marino***