**Year XXXIV n. 13 June 18, 2017**

**You are precious in my eyes**

It is a truth that governs the heart of God: man is a precious creature in his eyes, he his precious pearl of invaluable merit. The searcher of the parable of Jesus is the Lord. To buy the pearl, God gives his Son, the Beloved. He gives him from the cross, as a Crucifix. Jesus to buy the man, his precious pearl, the pearl stolen, robbed and plundered to him, pours his blood.

The precious pearl of the Lord was deported. It is in slavery. What does the Lord do to recover what is his? He turns heaven and earth upside down, subverts kingdoms, changes the arrangement of history and distorts men's plans. His people is precious in his eyes and He cannot allow other masters to humiliate, subject it to hard work, mock, persecute and deprive it of its life. The people is his and He comes to bring it back to its land, to give it liberty, to fill it with life, make it grow and make it numerous. The prophet Isaiah reveals this truth with immortal and timeless words.

*"But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. When you pass through the water, I will be with you; in the rivers you shall not drown. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned; the flames shall not consume you. You are precious in my eyes and glorious, and because I love you, I give men in return for you and peoples in exchange for your life. Fear not, for I am with you"* (Is 43: 1-28).

Jesus comes in search of his precious pearl: his people. He finds it in a state of subjugation with two sad powers: political and religious. The first deprived him of the freedom of the body. The second took away the freedom of spirit and of the soul. The precious pearl is a slave and a slave-maker, instead of being free and creator of freedom. This pearl creator of slavery worries of sheep, oxen, dogs, cats and every other animal. For them it suspends every law. Instead, for man, it transforms the Law of the Lord, the one and only Law of freedom and love, into a law of enslavement, slavery and death.

Man is not precious to man, that is why he is incapable of truly applying the holy law of God. The animal is precious and for it every loophole is found. In fact, for the animal there are no laws to be applied. Jesus overturns values. To the slave man and creator of slavery he says that the animal is only an animal. The animal is for man and not man for the animal. If the animal is no longer for man, but it is man for the animal then the man has become idolatrous. He worships the beast instead of man. Man is to be worshiped in God and for Him. Man is the precious pearl in God and for Him. The animal must never be replaced with man and never become the precious pearl. It is an animal. Nothing more. It must be respected as a creature of God and be used according to the laws of God.

This is the religious revolution brought by Jesus. He proclaimed the man to be worshiped, to be seen as his *"God,"* but always in God and for him. Since man is to be worshiped in God and for Him, man must be given the entire life. Life must be sacrificed for man. Indeed, God asks man to sacrifice life for the other man, starting with his family. The father sacrifices his life for his wife and children. The mother for her husband and children. The children for father and mother. Today we are in idolatry. Life can be killed in the womb, but the family of dogs have to be worshipped. One can destroy the human family, but cats’ families must be respected. Many of these things are done. Man is no longer the *"God"* of man.

Instead, Christ Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit see man as a true *"God"*. He is a *"God"* created by Them. To their created "God", they offer their very life. The Father gives himself to the precious pearl as the eternal love. The Holy Spirit as the most pure communion of truth and light. Christ Jesus, for his precious pearl, to free it from the bonds of death and every other slavery, gives his blood, he gives it really and physically, in its true essence. So much is the man precious in the eyes of the Blessed Trinity. All of God *"gives himself"* to buy again his precious pearl that had been plundered from him by the prince of the world.

I wonder: how precious is man for me? Preciousness is evident from how much I give myself for him. For all the delinquents of the earth, man is as precious as a filthy and unclean rag. He can be killed, robbed, raped, dishonoured, humiliated and tormented. As long as the other does not become the *"God"* to whom I will have to deliver my life for his redemption, I will never be of a rightful faith and pure love and I will never be a true disciple of Jesus. A vision of most pure faith. A vision that makes me a true disciple of Jesus. But is today man the precious pearl of man? Is man today really the "God" of man for whom our life is to be offered for his eternal redemption? Questions that require answers!

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, come to the aid of our little and petty faith. Ensure that every disciple of Jesus offers his life to buy every man for our God and Father and to give Him for the offer of our life his precious pearl, his treasure and his life.

***Father Costantino Di Bruno***

**Mary, a source of hope and guide to salvation**

Reflections from the homily of H.H. Francis at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima (13.5.2017)

Pain, suffering, problems, but also joy, satisfaction, serenity, are part of our life and our existence. Every day we strive to overcome the former to reach the latter and, if we cannot we often fall into discomfort, discouragement, or even more deeply into depression and despair. All of these are realities with which we dwell moment by moment and which define our way of being and living. Talking about our lives in these terms can make one understand that we are part of a flow of emotions that overwhelms us and, like a swollen river, leaves no chance of being governed and directed towards a precise destination, almost as if we were leaves without destination transported by the wind.

Reality is quite different from this. Each of us has been given the opportunity to choose and decide how to live and act. It may happen that we feel transported to do certain things as if we did not decide or did not want it, but in fact every action depends on our decision, our choice, which enables us to proceed in a sense rather than in another. What to do, then, to make good choices that lead to good? How to get out of this feeling of being carried by a current that drives us to what we do not want, but that we do because everyone does it?

We must discover the true foundation of our lives, the true force that drives us to move on, the true and only goal of our existence. We have been created in the image and likeness of God and our goal is God Himself and life with Him. In the Gospel we have the directions to follow to achieve this goal, the tools to use along the path and the aids that can support us and guide us in every circumstance. All of this is beautiful and almost idyllic, but we may wonder: how do I go about translating and practicing these directions in my concrete existence? In the Gospel I find the indications, but how can I apply them to my life and how do I live by examples that by now are far from situations that I live every day?

Before these questions arose, the Lord Jesus gave us the answer to all this: *"But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you"* (cf. John 16: 13-14). The Holy Spirit is the light we need to understand how to translate the truths proclaimed by the Gospel into our practical life. He is the guide capable of teaching and remembering every truth, fortifying and enlivening every baptized person so that he can accomplish his mission as a disciple and a witness to Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the one who causes every baptized never to fail in the commitments undertaken and the decision to be converted and believe in the gospel. The Holy Spirit is the engine that allows the Christian to never stop on the path to eternal life. Therefore, every day it is necessary to rely on the Holy Spirit to know in every moment how to live and work best to reach the holiness to which the Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit calls us.

From the gospel we know that Jesus, on the cross, entrusted his mother to the disciple he loved and the disciple to his mother (cf. Jn 19: 26-27) and in this way made Mary the mother of every baptized. In Mary, Jesus gives us a further help in winning our spiritual battles. Here is the sure guide that can always and at all times lead us to Christ. Here is the constant rescuer who watches over our lives and asks Christ for the help and support needed to win every danger and overcome every obstacle. Here is the attentive and caring teacher who shows us how to live in constant obedience to every motion of the Holy Spirit. Here is the vigilant sentinel that alarms us when an enemy's attack occurs or recalls us when we go towards wrong decisions. The Most Holy Virgin does all this if we rely on her and every day we ask for her help.

In the gospel, we already find the exhortations to follow the path indicated by the Lord to avoid going to eternal death and hell. In fact, this is the end for those who decide not to accept the invitation for salvation. But we are weak and of short lived memory. We often forget the teachings received and fall into great and terrible errors. Due to this weakness of ours, together with the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary also always reminds her every child the need to be converted to the Word of her Son Jesus to achieve salvation. Along history there are several moments when the Virgin Mary has shown herself to some people to remind the need for conversion and also the possibility of failing their own life by choosing the opposite path. One of these moments was in Fatima.

*"She foretold, and warned us about, a way of life that is godless and indeed profanes God in his creatures.  Such a life – frequently proposed and imposed – risks leading to hell.  Mary came to remind us that God’s light dwells within us and protects us, for, as we heard in the first reading, “the child [of the woman] was snatched away and taken to God” (Rev 12:5).  In Lucia’s account, the three chosen children found themselves surrounded by God’s light as it radiated from Our Lady.  She enveloped them in the mantle of Light that God had given her"* (Homily).

The Most Holy Virgin always protects her children so that they can live under the shadow of the Most High, she covers them with her mantle of light and guards them on the road that leads to heaven. All we are saying is what God with his Mother does work so that every man can gain access to salvation, but it is necessary that man chooses to follow this path, otherwise all of these aids remain opportunities offered and not exploited. It is necessary to be converted to the Word of the Father that is Jesus and to his will, so that all his help may be fruitful and lead to eternal life. If we get converted, then we become a hope for the whole world, because through us God can bestow his gifts to every man. The one of the Christian is a great and difficult mission, but with the help of the Holy Spirit and of Mary it is possible to realize it.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, you are the star in the morning, the guide and the necessary support to reach the port of salvation. We rely on you and we ask you to cover us up with your mantle of light. Our life is exposed to many dangers and many ills, ensure that get converted and help us to remain firm in this decision to follow you. If you are with us, we are certain that we can overcome every adversity because with you we will surely reach Jesus and learn how to live every Word that comes out of his mouth.

*Father Gregorio Nicola Corea*

**WHOEVER EATS THIS BREAD WILL LIVE FOREVER**

**(Blessed Body and Blood of Christ Year A)**

**NOT BY BREAD ALONE DOES MAN LIVE (Dt 8,2-3,14b-16a)**

The Lord educates his people, making him dwell in the wilderness for forty years. In this lifeless place, he manifests him with all the evidence that life is only from Him. If man lives of bread alone he dies. But if he listens to the Word and observes it, he is filled with all life. If man is in death he might only produce death and never life. Progress does not give life and not even discoveries. These things move it from one sepulchre to another, from a less rich to a richer tomb, but it is always death. Life is only in the Word, from the heard and lived Word. Is not today the man who is without the Word, a creator of death and its lover? Does not our society love death and consumes itself for it? Is not a society that is capable of a billion abortions in about twenty-five years perhaps a worshipper of death? But it will always be a worshipper of death if it does not enter the Word of his Creator, Lord and God.

**WE, THOUGH MANY, ARE ONE BODY (1Cor 10: 16-17)**

By eating the Eucharist we who are many, we become one thing, one body. Having become one body, the other is not a stranger, but he is our body. We are not two, but one body. If we are one body in the sacrament, in Christ we must also be one body in everyday life. Having assumed human nature, Jesus became the brother of every man. For every man he died on the cross and he has risen for every man. Now the mission of the body of Christ is the mission of all his body. Whoever receives the Eucharist must live and die for the world. He dies without knowing evil, but only good. Love begins with the release of our body from all sin to live all the potentialities of good that come from the body of Christ. Whoever does evil, who lives in vices, who transgresses the commandments sins against the sacrament of the Eucharist. He takes away his life to the highest good for every man.

**MY FLESH IS TRUE FOOD (Jn 6: 51-58)**

The reality of the Lord's body is the essence of the Eucharist. Jesus Christ is really, truly and substantially present. Who eats his body really, truly and substantially eats his flesh and drinks his blood. Who eats the body of Christ and drinks his blood, feeds on all of Christ, the whole Father, the whole Holy Spirit, feeds on the Virgin Mary, the whole Church and of all humanity. His life must be offered in the nourishment of all humanity and the whole Church. He has to offer it really, truly and substantially for an obligation of essence and not just of will. This is the mystery of the Eucharist: Christ gives himself to us, to make us able to give all ourselves to Him, but giving ourselves all to Him we gives us all to humanity and to the Church for the salvation of humanity and the sanctification of the Church. When we receive the Eucharist we go to the altar to make Christ Jesus the offer of all our life. He takes it, immerses it in his life and gives it back to us so that we make of it a real, truly and substantial gift to the Church and to the world.

**BEFORE MY HEAVENLY FATHER**

**(XII Sunday T.O. Year A)**

**MY FRIENDS ARE ON THE WATCH FOR ANY MISSTEP OF MINE (Jer 20,10-13)**

The prophet Jeremiah is the perfect image of Christ in the persecution because of his prophetic ministry. He feels daily the weight of his mission and often wishes he could retire, return to the simple life of one time. But the Lord has put the word in his heart as a fire that must explode. It cannot be restrained. Not only the enemies, but also the friends are waiting for his fall, that is that he gets tired and is abandoned. Till the last instant of his life even Jesus was tempted so that he fell, retreated and descended from the cross. But the Holy Spirit's strength has nailed him to the will of his Father. The nails are the figure that bind his body to the cross. Spiritual nails, Holy Spirit nails, bind his soul and his will to the will of God without any possibility of being separated. This is the great miracle of the Holy Spirit's strength that acts in Christ and in the prophets of the living God.

**THE GIFT IS NOT LIKE THE TRANSGRESSION (Rm 5: 12-15)**

The obedience of Christ the Lord produces a fruit so rich of truth, light, holiness and righteousness, able to wash all the sin of the world. That of Jesus is an obedience that produces a grace without any limit. There is no sin that cannot be washed in it. There is no heart that cannot be sanctified. The sin of the origins is contracted by birth and by generation. Then personal sin, that is done by will, comes. In the grace one does not enter by generation according to the flesh, but by the reception of Christ and the Spirit. Christ is preached, we believe in his Word, we are reborn by water and by the Holy Spirit, become new creatures and enter into the fullness of the gift of Jesus Christ. The grace of Christ is drawn in Christ, it is lived in Christ and it is fruitful in Christ. It is given for Christ's obedience to those who believe in Christ, but it is lived all in Christ, in the service of Christ for the salvation of humanity.

**EVERYONE WHO ACKNOWLEDGES ME BEFORE OTHERS  (Mt 10: 26-33)**

Today, Christ Jesus tells every man that wants to be a disciple, what the conditions for entering into the eternal kingdom of his Father are. One becomes a disciple, accepting to engage for all the days of life to confess before every man that Jesus is his God, his one and only God and that his Word, his Gospel, is his one and only Law. He will have to make this profession of faith with works and words, with every man, even in the courts, or before a death sentence. We know that Jesus is very faithful to this covenant. He will never fail it. It is now up to the Christian to be faithful. The covenant will not change eternally. It cannot be changed unilaterally either. Since Jesus will never modify it, the decision is up to man: observing it to enter the eternal kingdom of God, not observing it and ending up into the other kingdom: that of Satan in hell. God's mercy is Christ Jesus and this covenant is the work of his great and infinite charity and love. He gives us the Father, our one and only eternal good, if we confess him in front of men.

**Uganda: the desire to provide the charisma of the Apostolic Movement**

When Christ is met and His Gospel welcomed, life changes and one is on the move to communicate and to share it with those who have forgotten or do not know the word of Jesus. This desire is within my heart and in my mind since I met the Apostolic Movement and I have embraced its spirituality and mission. And that is why my 11th trip to Uganda has been very special to me. I felt strongly in me the need to make these dear friends mine know the charisma of the Apostolic Movement. Before I left I talked to them of it by telephone and, having seen their interest, I had informed my pastor, father Pasqualino Gualtieri, with whom we had been planning to go with a small delegation to visit my brother who has been a missionary for years, in those places. So I left with the desire to share with this people, thirsty of affection and love, the charisma of the Apostolic Movement.

So we arrive to Uganda: a wonderful people with great values, people who apparently do not seem to have anything but who instead have a great inner richness that is expressed in a sincere, spontaneous and immediate affection; a world full of children with purity in the soul and of joyful parents who are always ready for reception. Uganda has kidnapped my heart since 1980 and in this 2017 trip I have been able to see their great availability again. On the spot we enjoyed the important support of my daughter in law Betty, of Kizito and other local friends. In particular, two presentations of the spirituality of the Movement were organized: one in the Saint Joseph Parish in Kampala, May 6, in the presence of a large group of young people, the parish priest and his vicar, were both very happy with the potentiality of the charisma; the other, May 13, in the Nyakyera Catholic Parish, whose Church will be consecrated on June 4 this year, in front of a multitude of people, always in the presence of the pastor and his vice pastor, after the Mass celebrated in honour of Our Lady on the occasion of Fatima's Apparition. Then, there have been other personal encounters that aroused interest. A heartfelt thanks to the priests who welcomed us and especially to Fr. Emanuele, who testified to us that the spirituality of the Apostolic Movement was exactly what he was looking for.

Back in Italy I find that Uganda has surprised me again, touching me in the depths of my heart and soul with a succession of emotions. It suffices a little to make a baby happy: a balloon, a biscuit, a candy, a song, a dance, a shirt, a hug, a simple caress or a hello. The Lord is there in the midst of these wonderful creatures. Everything is indelibly impressed within me, by now Uganda is a part of my heart because it is there that the love of the Apostolic Movement has matured in me. For this new experience a deep thanks from the heart goes to Fr. Pasqualino, who with his charisma favoured this little mission and ensured that our stay were accompanied by the assiduous prayer of the Holy Rosary.

*Maria Luisa Tomaino*

**THAT DAY...**

Nothing belongs to you anymore:

you die and live for him, for your Lord.

Help me, my God, I want to continue...

You cannot go back;

you must serve the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul and with a righteous conscience.

Your heart loves the Eternal Love.

Your Lord wants his creature

to pass from darkness to light;

His is a call of love,

an invitation to conversion.

Your visions in spirit scandalize

and the man wants to stop you...

You cannot...

A fire burns your veins...

Go, be not afraid, serve the Lord your God.

And you go...

And you listen,

from who says he knows,

heresies, idolatries...

You keep quiet, you meditate and pray...

You invoke the Mother of Redemption:

"Move his heart."

"But man's will is necessary:

he is blind,

he is deaf,

he cannot,

he does not want;

He should destroy his mute idols,

get rid of all thirst for power

and earthly glory"-.

And you go...

A weeping moan overtakes you:

you remember the long Calvary

of the heavenly Mother,

the desert of Moses.

You bend;

the cross of Jesus is near you.

You cannot go back:

"Who puts hand to the plow and then turns back,

is not suitable for the Kingdom of Heaven."

Lord, my God...

Blessed Virgin...

Prayer... So much prayer... And you go...

***Maria Marino***