**Year XXXIV n. 14 02 July 2017**

**I make their knowledge foolish**

The Lord wants to convince his people that He has decided to redeem, free it and dissolve the inexhaustible chains of its harsh slavery. No conviction can ever be created in a heart and not even true hope unless you know the truth of the speaker. The Lord reveals and manifests his omnipotence, which is universal, on men and things, on what is near and what is far, on the present and future. He is also the Lord of the mind of man and every mind is subject to his Lordship.

*Raise a glad cry, you heavens: the Lord has done this; shout, you depths of the earth. Break forth, you mountains, into song, you forest, with all your trees. For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and shows his glory through Israel. Thus says the Lord, your redeemer, who formed you from the womb: I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens; when I spread out the earth, who was with me? It is I who bring to nought the omens of liars, who make fools of diviners; I turn wise men back and make their knowledge foolish. It is I who confirm the words of my servants, I carry out the plan announced by my messengers; I say to Jerusalem: Be inhabited; to the cities of Judah: Be rebuilt; I will raise up their ruins. It is I who said to the deep: Be dry; I will dry up your wellsprings. I say of Cyrus: My shepherd, who fulfils my every wish; He shall say of Jerusalem, "Let her be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid" (Cfr. Is 44, 1-28).*

The Lord says to every man, *"You can think of yourself as a guesser, a wise man, a scientist, a powerful and omnipotent person. Know, however, that you will be able to deceive the man until I allow it. When I will not allow it any more, then I will bring to nothing the omens of liars, I will render fool of diviners,* *I turn wise men back and make their knowledge foolish*." On no word of men can the future be built, but only on the divine Word. The word of man can only enlighten the Word of God, if it is a word drawn in his eternal wisdom. If it is only a man's word, whether it is wise, foolish, of science, of prejudice, of omen or of other nature, it is only a dead word. It does not create any real hope.

The Lord sends a strong message to the faithful man. He tells him to look neither at the words, nor works and nor history in which he lives, but to have only faith in his Word, for He is the Almighty Lord on earth and in heaven. On earth, only what He allows to happen takes place. When he decides that it does not have to take place anymore, he suddenly upturns the hinges of the universe. There is not a single man on whom he cannot intervene effectively. Neither is it necessary that He descends from heaven as He did with Moses and enters history to shake it with signs and wonders. An order, a command are only sufficient to Him, rather not even an order or a command, but only that he puts a new thought into the heart. One single new thought of his suffices and the history of humanity changes.

Someone might wonder, *"Why then does not the Lord intervene to stop any form of evil on our land at the start?"* If the Lord intervened and at every sin made man to die, a desert would rule on earth. Who does not commit sin every day? But the Lord has decided to offer everyone the time necessary for their conversion. Did not he give Pharaoh the time of quite ten powerful signs for his repentance? He persisted and died for his silly and foolish decision to enter the sea with wagons and horses. His stupidity was so great as to make him think he could use the sea as the land. But did not perhaps man today come to the same stupidity and ignorance? Does he not believe in his pride of being able to plough the sea of ​​history? With what results? All those who had so foolish and insidious a thought have miserably ended up in the waves. Their pride vanished into nothing, in a moment. Men are great only in foolishness and ignorance.

All economic, financial, political, administrative, judicial, scientific, environmental or of whatever nature and order are not, perhaps the fruit of this human wisdom and science that thought the sea arable and navigable the earth? Is not man today thinking that nature is water that can be crossed and modified at his own pleasure? When he will have destroyed his very human nature and will be swallowed by it then it will be too late. The word spoken by the Lord to his people is valid for yesterday, today and forever: "*Fear not! Stand your ground, and you will see the victory the Lord will win for you today. These Egyptians whom you see today you will never see again. The Lord himself will fight for you; you have only to keep still*" (Ex 14: 13-14). It is an eternal, imperishable and immortal word forever.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, you have sung it in your Magnificat: *"Great things has the Almighty done for me and holy is his name."* If the Christian believed in these words, as you and on your example he would always put himself in the service of his Will to manifest His omnipotence on earth, letting himself be made by Him in righteousness and true holiness. Help us, O Mother, to believe in the truth of our God. Faith, in the most pure obedience to the Word, is the only way to create hope in hearts.

***Father Costantino Di Bruno***

**"Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them..."**

Reflections from the homily of H.H. Francis in Genoa (27.5.2017)

The homily offered by Pope Francis during Mass in Genoa on his pastoral visit focuses on the words that the Risen Jesus addresses to his disciples before ascending to heaven. The Gospel of reference is the conclusion of St. Matthew: "Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (*Mt* 28,18-20).

The mission of proclaiming Christ, His Word, His Gospel - the Holy Father explains - is a mandate of the Risen Jesus to all of His Church, so it concerns priests, sisters, consecrated and lay people. Everyone is called to carry out the mission based on his ministry and charisma, living his own state of life in and according to the Word of God. However, he is called upon to do so. Indeed, the mission, to be lived with the Lord, is by Pope Francis considered the Christian's identity. The Pontiff also exhorts to consider the mission an emergency: "Let us ask the Lord the grace of non-being fossilized on non-central issues, but to fully devote ourselves to the urgency of the mission" (*Homily*).

From the Gospel and the words of the Pope it is clear that announcing Christ Jesus so that all peoples can become his disciples, receiving Baptism and observing all that Jesus taught, is an obligation for the Church. Not carrying out this mission is disobeying an explicit command of Jesus the Lord. Without carrying out this mission, the Church loses her own identity, because she does not obey an explicit order of her Master, of whom she professes being a disciple. The missionary and proclaiming activity of the Church has a precise content set by Jesus himself: proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, making disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching to observe all that Christ commanded (see *Mt* 28: 18-20; *Mk* 16:15).

Carrying out this precise mission, that derives from the explicit command of Jesus, is an obligation of love that the Church has towards every man. For only Jesus is light, life, peace, joy, love, bliss, freedom and truth for every man. If the Church does not announce Jesus and His Word, if she does not explicitly invite the world to enter into Christ by letting itself be baptized, if she does not teach all that Jesus has commanded so that it is lived with the help that comes from the Eucharist, she does not love the man, because she leaves him without the necessary and vital good. The Church carries out the greatest work of charity to man if she will open him the door to life: by entering the garden of Christ and leaving the desert of evil and sin, man will begin to live and will no longer be the creator of death for himself and for others.

Therefore, the mission that the Church has received from her Lord and Master is of vital importance. Without Christ, without his Word, without his Sacraments there is no life on earth, not even for the Church herself. That is why temptation seeks to distract the Church from this mission. It is in all ways seeking to convince the Church to carry out many other activities inside and outside, as long as she does not preach Christ, his Word and his Grace. It is trying to persuade the Church that to save the world, to make it more just and more liveable, it is sufficient to support some abstract concepts of love, peace, freedom, brotherhood, dignity and truth, but without Christ, without his Word and without His Sacraments. This is a deceiving temptation because without Christ, his Gospel, and his Spirit, these goods remain far from man. If the Church falls into this satanic trap it will be death for herself and for the whole world: man will be deprived of the water of life that cures him from sin and recreates him as a new creature. In fact, the work of salvation and of new creation of man is only of Christ through his Ecclesial body. No one else is qualified and able to accomplish it. If the Church renounced to be the instrument of Christ the creator of life, man would be prey to sin, evil and death forever.

The Church that fulfils her mission cannot be accused of proselytizing, that is of acting to make new followers. This is an unfounded and false accusation. The Church does not proclaim Christ for her own interests, nor to make her own disciples. She announces Christ for the love of Christ, to obey a command of Christ and to make disciples of Christ. She announces Christ for man's love, to indicate to man the way of life. In fact, the Church is formed by those who have welcomed Christ and have become his disciples because they have experienced directly in their own existence that Jesus is the only Redeemer of man, able to save from sin and evil. The Church announces, testifies, invites and proposes. He who listens and sees, if he wills, can welcome Christ, become his disciple in his Body and thus enter into life.

The responsibility of the Church is great. She is called upon to announce Christ, showing true preaching with her whole life conformed to Christ. In fact, the way of living the mission is that of living the Word of Christ. In whoever observes the Word of Jesus and lives it, the presence of Christ becomes ever more alive (see Jn 14, 23): this might be an effective missionaries. In fact, it is Christ who, with the power of the Holy Spirit, convinces, attracts and moves hearts to convert to His Word. Without the Word lived, every initiative and missionary activity will be artificial and false, will not produce fruit of salvation because it is a simple human activity: the missionary, without Christ, has no power of salvation.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, help the Church to remain faithful to the command received from your Son Jesus. Do not allow her to replace the announcement of Christ, His Word and His Sacraments, His Truth and Grace, in which alone is eternal life for man, with the proclamation of abstract and sterile human concepts incapable of salvation.

*Father Remo Fiorentino*

**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 person. 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.

**SUCH HAS BEEN YOUR GRACIOUS WILL**

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

**HE SHALL PROCLAIM PEACE TO THE NATIONS (Zech 9: 9-10)**

The prophet Zechariah sees his king entering Jerusalem in the guise of a humble, meek man sitting on a foal. It is an image that excludes every will of domination, conquest, war, struggle, blood shedding, slavery and submission. He comes like a king of peace. He is peace and peace is in Him. He is accessed through faith in his Word. One becomes the peace of his peace, letting be transformed from the Holy Spirit in the waters of Baptism. Having become one thing, a single life with him, we are in him and we are in peace. We get out of Him we return into the ancient enmity with God and creation, aggravated by our non-willingness to remain in Christ, to form with him a single body of peace and eternal life. But his is a special peace. It is a peace that does not free from suffering because it is peace that can take any suffering and turn it into a sacrifice of salvation and redemption.

**BUT YOU ARE NOT IN THE FLESH (Rm 8, 9, 11-13)**

Before baptism, man is under the yoke of the slavery of sin and death. He cannot but produce fruits according to the flesh. In baptism, he is free from the dominion of the flesh. He dies to what he was and is born or rises under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, to live according to the Spirit. But if the resurrected to spiritual life does not walk from Word to Word, from truth to truth, dwelling in the Word and truth, the aggressive agents of flesh who are vice and sin come to his conquest and will easily drag him again under the dominion of evil. The Spirit weakens and the flesh is strengthened. The Spirit grows, the flesh weakens and the Spirit lives. This is the spiritual path of the disciple of Jesus: growing boundlessly in the Holy Spirit so that the flesh always remains sleeping in him without it being able to manifest itself in its power of death and destruction of the spiritual man.

**TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU  (Mt 11: 25-30)**

With Jesus, one must pass from the old law to the new, from the old yoke to the new. The new yoke and the new law is the Word of Jesus, it is his Speech on the Mount. The Gospel must not be seen as an unbearable burden, but as the sweetest will of God, that asks us to manifest to every man all the beauty and holiness of his love, his truth and his justice. Then, the yoke is not a duty to be fulfilled. But it is a service to be given to God in his favour. The Lord asks his disciple to be placed in the service of the Father's glory. The world does not know who the Father is and the disciple must reveal him in his truth, becoming true in body and soul, in spirit and his entire being. He must reveal him in his holiness and the disciple must be holy in all his work. He must manifest him as most pure light and the Christian must illuminate the world with his light. Being a service designed to manifest the glory of the Lord, if it is lived with love, it becomes very light. Love is never heavy. Non-love is heavy. Love is never heavy, for true love is an ever new gift poured into us by the Holy Spirit.

**Apostolic Movement: Final Report on the service carried out in the**

**Archdiocese of Catanzaro-Squillace - Year XXXVIII-2016/17 (Part 1 of 4)**

The Apostolic Movement began its activity in the new pastoral year on September 10, 2016, with a Jubilee Pilgrimage to Paola at the Sanctuary of St. Francis. *"From the Eucharist to the World: Mission as Mercy"*: this was the theme of the day that saw the participation of over a thousand adhering members. H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Bertolone, Metropolitan Archbishop of Catanzaro-Squillace and President of the CEC, presided over the Eucharistic co-celebration, animated by the many young people from various parishes of the diocese. Father Domenico Concolino held a profound and wise reflection on the theme of the pilgrimage. The day ended with the presentation of the life and spirituality of St. Francis of Paola by Fr. Domenico Crupi, followed by the visit of the Franciscan places.

On October 24, 2016, in the parish church "Mary Mother of the Church" in S. Ianni of Catanzaro, H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Bertolone, with a Eucharistic co-celebration, inaugurated the catechesis scheduled by the Apostolic Movement for the year 2016-17, on the topic *"The joy of love: the journey of families*. *Accepting, accompanying, discerning and integrating,"* read in the light of the Gospel of the Lord's Day and of guidelines drawn for all the Diocese with the Pastoral Letter *"The charm of the gospel of tenderness – Fr. Pino Puglisi: the extraordinarily ordinary style for our times in a constant change"*. In the same celebration, Msgr. Archbishop welcomed the renewal of vows of 21 Consecrated, for the fourth year, and of 6 Consecrated for the second year, in the Secular Institute "Mother Mary of the Redemption." **After having addressed** a paternal greeting to the **founder, Mrs. Maria Marino**, the central ecclesiastical assistant, Msgr. Costantino Di Bruno, the priests, the consecrated, and all the people present, he pointed out that *"joy is the distinctive feeling of whoever lives the Gospel and communicates it to others, with his always illuminated and serene face. Ensure that each of your listeners may meet the loving face of Jesus who does not stop at the outside, but reads in each of us the true image of God. Help people meet and listen to what Jesus says through systematic catechesis, the practice of the Sacraments and the works of mercy"*.

Catechesis and spiritual encounters were held throughout the year at the aforementioned church, by various priests, according to a programmed schedule and, in other dioceses and parish seats, by the respective assistant priests. In the same parish church, every Monday, through the reading of her writings, *the Inspirer and Founder of the A.M., Mrs. Maria Marino*, continued to exhort all the faithful present to carry out the evangelizing mission of the proclamation and remembrance of the Word of Jesus.

This year's commitment of the Apostolic Movement continued in an intense and constant way in the *service of charity* in the parishes and in the places of daily life: several members have lent their work at the tables for the poor, visits of sick at homes, in clinics, in hospitals, in nursing homes and in elderly residences; care to disadvantaged school children, in remote adoptions (diocesan family home of Befotaka in Madagascar, diocese of Khammam in India and some families in Cameroon) and with signs of solidarity for the areas of Ecuador and the centre of Italy hit by the earthquake.

**INVOCATION... TO THE LORD...**

Lord,

when your love is denied,

when the hearts are as hard as stone,

when one is blind, deaf and mute

to your call of love,

send your Holy Spirit from above

to renew the world.

Lord,

Righteous, Holy and Almighty,

Creator of heaven and earth,

God of every man, pour out

for the love of your name,

your forgiveness and your grace.

Lord,

slow to anger and full of mercy,

do not allow the obstinate and the rebels

to your holy name

to fight and battle the salvation that you,

at the price of the Blood of your Son,

want to donate to every man of good will.

Lord,

God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob,

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who to liberate your people

opened the sea

and fed your children in the wilderness,

you who have overcome death

and made life shine,

attract to you with eternal bonds

the creature

that you made in your image and likeness.

Lord,

God of all goodness,

effuse constancy and perseverance over those who,

missionaries and messengers of your holiness,

proclaim through land and sea,

among many dangers and many sufferings

your Word and the Gospel of your grace

to the praise and glory of your Divine Majesty.

Lord,

we ask it of you for your great mercy,

for the death on the cross of your Only Son

and for the pain on the Golgotha ​​of his Afflicted Mother.

Blessed Virgin, pure and caste,

intercede for us with your love of Mother.

***Maria Marino***