

30. March 2020

"Reflection on the Pandemic"

Part 2

Yesterday we had spoken of this pandemic as being a permission from God, and representing a rebuke from Him. I had mentioned the reasons why this would be understandable on the part of God's love and care, in view of the increasing "culture of death".

It is, in the first place, about the eternal salvation of men. Yes, man is to be saved from his lost life and from his alienation from God, and he is to live as a child of the Heavenly Father and be sheltered under His love, already in this world and, in full, in eternity.

For this, God has already done everything on His side, and now it depends on the person whether or not he accepts the offer of grace, after having met Him. The commandments of God are by no means mere suggestions as to how one could live more correctly; rather, they are the basic conditions that God has set forth so that there can be true life. As it is already stated in the Old Testament, when the Lord gives the Law to His people through Moses: *"If you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God (...), you will live..."*. (Dt 30,16). Its rejection, however, would bring death. (cf. v. 17-18).

If one does not close one's eyes, one will see that very often the commandments of God are not observed, even in the public sphere and in legislation. Practices such as abortion are tolerated and even encouraged.

Now, when evil, misdirection, sin begins to increase, it is not only understandable that God allows such a plague to proliferate; we must also consider it a rebuke that aims to bring men back to the path of true life, or at least to seek it sincerely. Therefore, we suddenly lose those securities that had become very precious to us; securities that easily become idols. So men are called to a sincere conversion! This is the central point!

Men must convert to God, so that they may recognize His love and change their lives according to the Divine Will.

We must not let ourselves be confused... This plague is not a revenge of nature for not having treated it well. This is a deception!

I repeat: it is about conversion to God, a deep moral conversion, a return to the Father's house.

There is no doubt that it is right to keep the ecological issue in mind in our lives, and to act accordingly and with prudence. In this field, certainly at times there is a need for improvement, but this is by no means the essential issue! Unfortunately, many times this theme takes on an ideological tinge. To speak of an "ecological conversion" without "moral conversion" does not touch the point of what is really at stake.

This would be, then, "the hour of the Church"! The Lord has entrusted her to be the Teacher of the people, and she has therefore a binding mission to fulfil. This pandemic is a serious situation, and we have to note that the Church, in large part, is not spiritually prepared to face the crisis in an appropriate manner. Too quickly, it is subordinating itself to the wishes of governments, and sometimes even anticipating government action.

Only a few pastors point out that for the faithful it is no less important than bodily nourishment to receive spiritual nourishment in the liturgy.

Certainly the indication to be especially concerned about the sick and the dying is correct; but it is too one-sided. Even the faithful need spiritual food, especially in times of world crisis. Only a few in the hierarchy dare to say things as they are. Few raise their voices as they would expect from shepherds who want to protect their flock from spiritual famine.

Here and there there are creative and courageous priests who seek ways to provide their faithful with the holy food. May God reward them!

Obviously there are also alternatives to closing churches and avoiding public worship services. This can be seen, for example, in Poland, where it was proposed that more Sunday Masses be celebrated, so that the faithful attend each celebration in smaller numbers and so that the necessary preventive measures are respected. Without going into detail, surely ways could be found for the faithful to receive the holy food, if there was a strong will behind it and not everything that a government prescribed was immediately taken up.

Moreover, where is the authentic and authoritative proclamation? Now would be a time when the Word of God should be offered to people in abundance! They are in

need of guidance! And even if the proclamation was rejected, at least what had to be said would have been said, and it sometimes happens that later on life situations arise in which one remembers to listen...

So, what's to be done?

Tomorrow we'll continue with the subject...