

23 of August 2019
„Ruths love“

Ruth 1:1.3-6.14-16.22

In the days when the Judges were governing, a famine occurred in the country and a certain man from Bethlehem of Judah went - he, his wife and his two sons - to live in the Plains of Moab.

Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she and her two sons were left. These married Moabite women: one was called Orpah and the other Ruth. They lived there for about ten years.

Mahlon and Chilion then both died too, and Naomi was thus bereft of her two sons and her husband. She then decided to come back from the Plains of Moab with her daughters-in-law, having heard in the Plains of Moab that God had visited his people and given them food.

They started weeping loudly all over again; Orpah then kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people. But Ruth stayed with her. Naomi then said, 'Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her god. Go home, too; follow your sister-in-law.' But Ruth said, 'Do not press me to leave you and to stop going with you, for wherever you go, I shall go, wherever you live, I shall live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.

This was how Naomi came home with her daughter-in-law, Ruth the Moabitess, on returning from the Plains of Moab. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

The wonderful words of Ruth allow us to look deep into this woman's heart: *"Wherever you go, I shall go, wherever you live, I shall live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God."* (Ruth 1:16b). The text then continues: *"Where you die, I also die, and I will be buried."* (Ruth 1:17).

It is a language of love and devotion that can hardly be more beautiful.

Here is to recognize the deep awakening of love and the ability of a human being to give himself away to a person. On the human level, we visibly encounter this mystery of love, especially in the relationship between man and woman, which even become ONE flesh.

But this way of devotion and fidelity is not only related to the love relationship between man and woman, but it reflects the relationship of God to the human soul or the Devotion of the Church to her divine Lord. We discover this devotion among the disciples of the Lord, in Peter, who wants to give his life for the Lord (*see Jn 13:37*).

If we reflect on this ability to give ourselves completely in a free act of love that is neither forced nor primarily determined by the circumstances, then we understand that the innermost core of Christ's follower is an act of love.

The commandment that we should love the Lord with all our hearts, with all our strength and with all our souls describes this reality to us. Devotion to the person of God, who is a complete and unrestricted one, is deeply rooted in us. We even only discover our true identity if we carry out this act of love in our own hearts and then realize it in life.

In Ruth's case, out of love for Naomi, she also comes to the knowledge of the true God, what can actually happen. Sometimes God uses the beauty of human love to open the way to Him through such a love!

The realization that the succession of the Lord in the deepest is an act of love is freed from many constraints. Our faith is not primarily a collection of duties and orders that we have to fulfill, but an answer to God's love and a devotion to Him.

Of course, the duties are not lifted, but the spirit in which we fulfill them changes as it is increasingly transformed by love. The focus is then not on our effort, but on love! We are looking at the person to whom you want to give yourself.

The right exercise of authority is similar.

Yesterday we heard about the mild kingdom of Mary.

True authority is rooted in love, which has the truth as the basis.

It is also the way spiritual shepherds have to feed their flock. This distinguishes them from those shepherds who want to replace the true authority of love and truth with their own natural strength.

With Ruth we realize that her love was so great that she could go into the unknown with Naomi. So it is with devotion to the Lord. When our love for the Lord becomes great, we do not need to know what the future holds and no longer secure ourselves. We live in the safety of his love, just as Ruth was sure of her mother-in-law's love and could testify her own love!