

31. October 2019

„Victorious Faith“

*Rom 8, 31b-39*

*After saying this, what can we add? If God is for us, who can be against us? Since he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for the sake of all of us, then can we not expect that with him he will freely give us all his gifts? Who can bring any accusation against those that God has chosen? When God grants saving justice who can condemn? Are we not sure that it is Christ Jesus, who died -- yes and more, who was raised from the dead and is at God's right hand -- and who is adding his plea for us? Can anything cut us off from the love of Christ -- can hardships or distress, or persecution, or lack of food and clothing, or threats or violence; as scripture says: For your sake we are being massacred all day long, treated as sheep to be slaughtered? No; we come through all these things triumphantly victorious, by the power of him who loved us. For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Today we encounter an overwhelming certainty of faith about the goodness and omnipotence of God. Nothing is left out, from all sides and possibilities the Apostle allows us to share in this security in God. A security that accompanied him in all the impassable situations that we heard about in his so-called fool's speech (2 Cor 11,21b-29).

It is a victorious certainty that is not rooted in human optimism and trust in one's own strength, but arises entirely in trust in God with full awareness of one's own weaknesses.

How can we obtain this precious security in faith in order to meet the challenges of our personal lives and not to be in despair with the general world situation?

If we take a closer look at the text, we will discover something like a spiritual methodology.

First of all, the Apostle speaks of God's superior act of love in the devotion of His Son Jesus Christ to us. If God is ready for such an act of love, why should He not carry out what His will for salvation has decided for us. Paul thus follows the logic of God's love and omnipotence. All other certainties come from this, for the Son of God stand up for men before his Father.

Whoever reflects this deeply and lets it into his heart grows to existential security, which takes its course from God.

In the face of God's superior love, which goes to the salvation of man, the threats that endanger man's life also lose their primary significance. Instead, the Apostle points out to us the overcoming of all the dangers.

Thus we are taught by the text how we too can reach greater certainty of faith. Too often we are in temptation of being taken by the difficulties and lose sight of God. One then leaves oneself to the own dynamics of negativity or to the various forms of fears. In this way, however, we will not overcome the fears and come to a victorious faith. Maybe the negative feelings will calm down after some time, but they will come back!

But if we consciously follow the path of the Apostle, we will align our hearts with God and contemplate the great actions of His love. In these actions we can then, so to speak, descend and place hope in the goodness and wisdom of God in the concrete situation in which we find ourselves.

Let us take an example that is afflict to many Catholics. It is the present confusions in our holy Church that remain less and less hidden. Without diminishing their explosiveness in the slightest - and we will unfortunately have to talk about it - we must raise our eyes to God. He has promised us that the gates of hell will not overwhelm the Church (*cf. Mt 16,18*). This does not mean, however, that she cannot be put under severe affliction and that hell will not try to destroy the Church. However the Word teaches us that the Lord also keeps the present situation in his hands and will lead through all afflictions to its salvation goal.

With such confidence we should overcome the severe crisis of the Church and remain faithful to the Lord. It is the time in which new saints can be awakened, who defend the Church against the invading wolves and in some Catholics also may be the martyrs will wake up.

This awareness, however, does not lead to an unhealthy passivity or to a fatalistic attitude. A victorious overcoming means that we do everything that is up to us to overcome a situation and at the same time be guided by full trust in God.