

21. November

“We have to obey God more than human beings!”

1 Macc 2,15-29

The king's commissioners who were enforcing the apostasy came to the town of Modein for the sacrifices. Many Israelites gathered round them, but Mattathias and his sons drew apart. The king's commissioners then addressed Mattathias as follows, 'You are a respected leader, a great man in this town; you have sons and brothers to support you. Be the first to step forward and conform to the king's decree, as all the nations have done, and the leaders of Judah and the survivors in Jerusalem; you and your sons shall be reckoned among the Friends of the King, you and your sons will be honoured with gold and silver and many presents. Raising his voice, Mattathias retorted, 'Even if every nation living in the king's dominions obeys him, each forsaking its ancestral religion to conform to his decrees, I, my sons and my brothers will still follow the covenant of our ancestors. May Heaven preserve us from forsaking the Law and its observances. As for the king's orders, we will not follow them: we shall not swerve from our own religion either to right or to left.' As he finished speaking, a Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the altar in Modein as the royal edict required. When Mattathias saw this, he was fired with zeal; stirred to the depth of his being, he gave vent to his legitimate anger, threw himself on the man and slaughtered him on the altar. At the same time he killed the king's commissioner who was there to enforce the sacrifice, and tore down the altar. In his zeal for the Law he acted as Phinehas had against Zimri son of Salu. Then Mattathias went through the town, shouting at the top of his voice, 'Let everyone who has any zeal for the Law and takes his stand on the covenant come out and follow me.' Then he fled with his sons into the hills, leaving all their possessions behind in the town. Many people who were concerned for virtue and justice went down to the desert and stayed there.

These days, the history of the Maccabees accompanies us and we hear of the heroic resistance to the orders of the Greek king, but also of the apostasy of the Israelites. It is about questions of true faith and obedience to God. The situation leads people into a decision-making situation from which they cannot escape: stay true to God and the commandments, or bow to the will of the king for the sake of their lives.

Today, Mattathias, one of the respected men of the Israelites, is asked to give the rest of the population an example of waste in order to influence the other inhabitants of Modeon for idolatry. Yesterday we heard that the mother should tempt her youngest son to sin against the law of God.

But, as yesterday, we met the mother and, before that, Eleazar, we meet today the courageous Mattathias, again a valiant and diligent servant of God who refused to obey the king's command. Before all the inhabitants and those who wanted to guide him to idolatry, he exclaimed, "*Even if every nation living in the king's dominions obeys him, each forsaking its ancestral religion to conform to his decrees, I, my sons and my brothers will still follow the covenant of our ancestors. May Heaven preserve us from forsaking the Law and its observances. As for the king's orders, we will not follow them: we shall not swerve from our own religion either to right or to left*".

Are we also capable of taking such a clear position if we were to find a similar situation?

Perhaps we are tempted to say that it would hardly happen to us. However, I would remind you of the Coptic martyrs of our time, who were to be forced by Islamic extremists at risk of death to renounce their faith and embrace Islam. They did not and were all beheaded. People from countries where forms of extremist Islam rule can report many such excesses.

But what about Europe and other parts of the world? Is such a situation of persecution conceivable?

You shouldn't feel too safe. Increasingly, we are confronted with legislation that is directed against life and thus explicitly against the morality of our faith. Consider abortion, euthanasia, homosexual "marriages" and much more. It can very easily happen - and it is already happening - that one should be forced to perform abortions, for example as a doctor, or nurses are called upon to help or even midwives should be integrated. There is already a decision-making situation which no longer makes it possible, for example, to continue to practise the profession. There are more examples. Let us not be naive and think that this cannot become much more serious.

So one cannot follow the authorities of the state if things were demanded that were contrary to faith, for one "*must obey God rather than human beings!*" (Acts 5,29).

Neither the UN, nor the European Union, nor any government has the right to demand anything from us that is contrary to faith. We can only obey them if it is justified, and it is precisely these political institutions we must be vigilant, because antichristian infiltration is increasingly evident.

Unfortunately, Catholics who adhere to the traditional faith can even come into situations within the church to have to discern when orders and directions no longer correspond to the way of the Church and deviate. I have repeatedly drawn attention to this! Some Catholics think that any form of criticism of the Pope's leadership is a devaluation of his person. If one adopts such an attitude, then one can no longer really deal with the situation, carry out a discernment of spirits and subsequently become increasingly blind.

It is important to remain faithful to the traditional faith and not to deviate left or right. Obviously, the Pachamamacult - I mentioned a few days ago in the context of the Amazon Synod in the Vatican - is such a deviation.

Auxiliary Bishop Schneider makes it clear: *"Anyone who claims that the Pachamama worship was a trivial matter and had no religious, but only cultural aspect, is taught a better one by one in the context of the Amazon Synod by the "Fondazione Missio", a Organ of the Italian Episcopal Conference, published prayer to Pachamama, where it says among other things: "Pachamama, good mother, be gracious to us! Be gracious to us! Let the seeds taste good, that nothing bad happens, that frost must not disturb it, that it produces good food. We ask you: give us everything! Be gracious to us! Be gracious to us!"*

The Pachamama cult performed in the Vatican during the Amazon Synod is either a form of idolatrous superstition, because it contains gestures that, in their original version, imply the adoration of the "Mother Earth" considered a deity, or it is a form of non-idolatrous superstition. This Pachamama cult expresses faith in the earth as a living and personal being, which is why this is a syncretism that introduces deceptive things into the Christian cult, which must always be directed by its essence only to the true God. "

It is therefore important to be vigilant if the faith of our fathers is attacked - by whomever - and to resist. This is not just a right, but a spiritual duty. The brave Maccabees we hear about these days may be an example to us in today's world to resist antichristian influences as firmly as they have!