

24. December 2019

“The splendor of Mercy”

*Lk 1,67-79*

*His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has visited his people, he has set them free, and he has established for us a saving power in the House of his servant David, just as he proclaimed, by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient times, that he would save us from our enemies and from the hands of all those who hate us, and show faithful love to our ancestors, and so keep in mind his holy covenant. This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant us, free from fear, to be delivered from the hands of our enemies, to serve him in holiness and uprightness in his presence, all our days. And you, little child, you shall be called Prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare a way for him, to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the faithful love of our God in which the rising Sun has come from on high to visit us, to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow dark as death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

May these last words of today's Gospel guide us to receive the Christmas message deeply in our hearts! It is mercy that moves God to come to us human beings; a mercy that we have not acquired, but that is freely given to us!

Nothing else has moved our heavenly Father, than this particularly gracious expression of his love! If we internalize this in these days of the birth of our Lord, then our heart will be transformed under the influence of mercy! We experience it as an immeasurable gift! Humility and gratitude are the fruits when we internalize this gift of God's love!

It can become so quiet in us, amazed at the generosity of God, who does not forget those people who *"sit in darkness and in the shadow of death"* and leave them to their fate, but opens themselves up to seek what is lost!

We all need a greater light, even if the Lord has already taken up residence in our hearts! There is still so much missing that this mercy may penetrate our being and that we may understand it properly!

Mercy always precedes us and calls us to repentance, so that it can then become permanently effective in our lives! Mercy is intimately married to the truth, for without truth it would become a veil of concealment and lose its specific dignity! It could become a cheap offer of human relativization and thus diminish the seriousness that lies in the demand for conversion! It would also darken the view of how deep man is “*in darkness and in the shadow of death*”, and how he needs the mercy of God's saving love!

To practise mercy is a special challenge of love. It is different from general compassion and solidarity with the general misery of the creation.

In mercy, the greatness of God's love comes towards us and invites us to become generous ourselves! In mercy lies a specific spiritual nobility that is able to adorn our soul with beauty!

May the mercy of God invite us to become like Him, so that through us too, people may come into contact with this wonderful way of God and understand: This is God! And draw the conclusion that they can entrust themselves to Him.

In the Christmas season that is about to dawn, I am resorting to meditations that I had already laid down last year. They can serve those who joined our circle of listeners in the course of the year. And those who already heard them last year and before may also benefit from the repetition, together with the songs of Harpa Dei!

So we wish to all listeners and readers of our reflections a deep and reflective Christmas and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, so that we may all become witnesses of the supreme love of God that shines forth to us in the Child of Bethlehem!

Elijah and Harpa Dei