

29. February 2020

“The way of simplicity”

Isa 58,9b-14

If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist and malicious words, if you deprive yourself for the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkest hour will be like noon. Yahweh will always guide you, will satisfy your needs in the scorched land; he will give strength to your bones and you will be like a watered garden, like a flowing spring whose waters never run dry. Your ancient ruins will be rebuilt; you will build on age – old foundations. You will be called ‘Breach-mender’, ‘Restorer of streets to be lived I’. If you refrain from breaking the Sabbath, from taking your own pleasure on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath ‘Delightful’, and the day sacred to Yahweh ‘Honourable’, if you honour it by abstaining from travel, from seeking your own pleasure and from too much talk, then you will find true happiness in Yahweh, and I shall lead you in triumph over the heights of the land. I shall feed you on the heritage of your father Jacob, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.

It is actually so simple: If the people listen to the voice of the Lord and follow His instructions, then the love of God can unfold completely unhindered in the lives of the people. Then, the plan that He has for each individual person and for the people becomes a palpable reality and full of blessing. It is so simple and coherent! If only there were not the great Ego who often has different ideas and wishes and so easily forgets the instructions of God!

On God's side, things remain simple; even if through us human beings the complications and entanglements arise, the resistances and mistakes, the sins and errors...

But God remains faithful to Himself, and continues to open for us the simple path, even at the cost of the Passion and Death of His Beloved Son: it is the uncomplicated path of spiritual childhood, of friendship with God; indeed, of the spousal relationship with Him

God integrates all man's detours and failures, accompanies and constantly admonishes him to conversion. Sometimes, however, people misunderstand God's goodness, his longsuffering and gentleness, and think that they can continue in their disorderly life, justifying themselves with an argument of divine mercy. But there is

something they do not understand. God cannot approve of disorder; he loves the sinner, but not the sin; he loves his people Israel, but not the paths they often take!

That is why, in today's reading, the Lord names the conditions under which a good life can be lived in abundance of grace; so that the light of His people can shine and the darkness can vanish. Actually, the recipe is very simple!

Let us, in this Lent, take up God's simple way and let us get rid of every complication. We know what we have to do to make our Christian life fruitful; we know that our Father's love is always close to us, conquering us so that we may be more united to him. Perhaps we have at least an idea about the next steps we need to take. Why not simply take them? Let us leave behind what is holding us back; let us ask our Lord to undo all our attachments, which are preventing us from moving forward and making our life more fruitful!

Venerable Anna de Guigné, a small and simple soul before the Lord, said a wonderful phrase: "Nothing is difficult when you love God!"

It's simple and shows us the way. The love for God must grow and self-love must give way. That is the path!

This too is actually simple, but only with the effort to overcome the slowness of our nature, its limitations, its curiosity, its interdependence with the world, its impermanence, etc.!

God is with us on this journey and every step to love him more than self-interest, makes love grow!

Perhaps we should listen to another suggestion from the text. As we hear, the Lord places great value on the Sabbath as a holy day of the week. I have noticed that in Christianity the importance of Sunday, which has taken the place of the Sabbath, is becoming less and less important, and I have noticed this especially in Latin America!

Wouldn't it be important to reclaim the holy Sunday, at least personally? I think it would be a joy for the Lord and good for our soul!