

25. August 2020

“Soberly face the dangers”

2 Thess 2,1-3,14-16

About the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, brothers, and our being gathered to him: please do not be too easily thrown into confusion or alarmed by any manifestation of the Spirit or any statement or any letter claiming to come from us, suggesting that the Day of the Lord has already arrived. Never let anyone deceive you in any way. It cannot happen until the Great Revolt has taken place and there has appeared the wicked One, the lost One, through our gospel he called you to this so that you should claim as your own the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Stand firm, then, brothers, and keep the traditions that we taught you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who has given us his love and, through his grace, such ceaseless encouragement and such sure hope.

The statements about the "Day of the Lord" and the statements about the return of Christ must be met with sobriety! Sobriety does not mean, however, that we have to reject from the outset every prophetic word that wants to prepare us for difficult times and draw attention to the dangers for the children of God! This would be just as wrong as keeping a constant anxious watch for particular revelations or being driven by an unhealthy curiosity.

In this context, a word of admonition to some believers is necessary. The Internet is such a vast and unprotected source of information that much of what is on offer in the religious world needs to be checked with prudence.

The main source of truthful and helpful news for us is taken from the Holy Scriptures and from the traditions. *“Stand firm, then, brothers, and keep the traditions that we taught you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.”* For us this is the authentic teaching of the Church in accordance with Tradition. In addition, with the Lord's help, there may well be genuine prophetic instructions and insights which require a careful discernment of spirits in order to distinguish true from false or half-true, deceptions, etc.

Just as Lucifer can cause confusion in the hierarchy, so he can cause confusion in the field of so-called private revelations. Here he can put us into artificial

excitement, upset the soul, simplify complex issues and create an unpleasant space of accusations, exaggerations with personal attacks and devaluations.

On the other hand, he is also interested in minimising and downplaying real dangers and corresponding warnings, so that the believers remain as far as possible in spiritual sleep and do not perceive what is happening.

If we listen carefully to the apostle, he says that we should not let ourselves be upset and frightened so easily! This means dealing with everything that comes our way in peace and trust in God!

In connection with the "Day of the Lord", St Paul draws our attention to "the wicked One", "the lost One" and the apostasy from God! This is not only a partial process or limited to certain areas, but should concern many people who live their lives without God! When we speak of a falling away from God, then it is probably meant in our Christian sense that people and whole peoples, who were closer to God before, are going apart before our eyes!

This happens, for example, with the European countries, which have given us many missionaries and preached the gospel all over the world. Today, on the other hand, Europe is increasingly becoming the motor of a "culture of death.

Apostasy is a sign before the coming of the "wicked One" and this apostasy is not only happening in Europe. Everywhere Catholics see how many people no longer live in a living relationship with God, sometimes even no longer ask about God, how former Catholic countries are caught up in the maelstrom of an apostasy or are already in this maelstrom! Even in the church, the stronghold of faith, there are serious signs of an inner-church apostasy!

Is the "wicked One", whom we can also call the "Antichrist", coming soon?

Let us remain sober in the words of St. Paul, and let us not be upset and frightened. Instead, let us remain steadfast and, following the advice of St. Paul, hold fast to the holy traditions and trust in the Lord.

But let us also not close our eyes to all the worrying developments in the world and in the church, so that we are not surprised by further events and are completely unprepared if the antichristian powers try to take over world domination, for example, and an antichrist appears in public.

It must be clear to us that in the case of an antichristian government we Christians would be in the way, because we are witnessing another king to which the power of darkness does not want to subordinate itself.

So far, as I see it, one or the Antichrist has not yet publicly held a superior office. But there are some indications that such a figure could emerge and take on an enormous amount of power in the modern world. Whether such a figure would become the leader of a one-world government would have to be closely observed.

The apostle shows us the right way, because the advice of that time is just as valid today. Consolation and help in all situations comes from the Lord on whom we should rely. But while we perceive the power of darkness, it must not become our primary concern. Instead, we must be guided by the Lord. He should fill our minds and hearts, give us the strength to do good works, so that we may serve in His kingdom and not allow ourselves to be weakened by other powers.