

23. November 2020

## “The flock of the Lamb”

*Rev 14:1-5*

*Next in my vision I saw Mount Zion, and standing on it the Lamb who had with him a hundred and forty-four thousand people, all with his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. I heard a sound coming out of heaven like the sound of the ocean or the roar of thunder; it was like the sound of harpists playing their harps. There before the throne they were singing a new hymn in the presence of the four living creatures and the elders, a hymn that could be learnt only by the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the world. These are the sons who have kept their virginity and not been defiled with women; they follow the Lamb wherever he goes; they, out of all people, have been redeemed to be the first-fruits for God and for the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths and no fault can be found in them.*

We hear today of that flock who have remained faithful to the Lord, of those who, through all persecutions and tribulations, have kept the name of the Lord and his Father inscribed deep within them. With God's help, they have remained steadfast! They sing the song of the redeemed, which they have been taught and which only they can sing. This song is revealed through the Spirit of God, which those who follow the Lamb receive wherever it leads them. Their whole life has become the praise of God and in them God is glorified; their whole life is a song pleasing to the Lord!

*“They follow the Lamb wherever he goes”...*

Here obedience out of love for God is addressed. It is not the realisation of one's own desires and ideas that belongs in the true discipleship of the Lord, but rather to follow the call that has come to us: *“You did not choose me, no, I chose you”* (Jn 15:16a) says the Lord to his disciples.

The ways we have to travel are determined by God's good providence. For us it is only a matter of God's will unfolding ever more in us, that the Lamb is being able to lead us, and of us listening attentively to this guidance and following it. This includes the serious spiritual path, which releases us from our self-centredness and binds us to the Lamb of God!

These “*are the sons who have kept their virginity and not been defiled with women*”...

To follow the Lord and at the same time surrender to different lusts is not possible. The life of disordered sensuality, the summit of which is sexual confusion, must be rejected and we must seek with all our heart the purity of heart and body. Even people who have lost their way in life and lost their physical virginity can, through a life of sincere conversion, become spiritually virginal again and regain a kind of integrity, if the Blood of the Lamb deeply purifies them.

Virginity means keeping one's heart entirely for the Bridegroom of souls, not voluntarily tolerating in us the slightest thing that might compromise love for the Bridegroom, not entering into illegitimate links with the world and its false magic! In other words, in the language of the Apocalypse, no liaison with the Whore of Babylon (*cf. Rev 17 and 18*)!

*No lie was found in their mouths...*

It is foreign to this flock of the Lamb to disguise itself through the lie. They are confessors and will not - for their own benefit - resort to the means of pretence and lies. They abhor the lie and follow it to the bottom, so that it completely escapes from them. Their soul is transparent before the Lord.

For the lie, which wants to conceal its own intentions, affects the whole being of man! This is foreign to those who follow the Lamb wherever he leads them!

*No fault can be found in them...*

In *Philippians 2:14-15* it says:

*“Let your behaviour be free of murmuring and complaining so that you remain faultless and pure, unspoilt children of God surrounded by a deceitful and underhand brood, shining out among them like bright stars in the world”.*

This is how we should be found by the Lord - after he has redeemed us - found without blemish!

May the Lord grant us that we may belong to this flock which he gathers from all nations and tribes (*cf. Rev 5:9-10*)!