

12. December 2020

The birth of the Lord in us, Part 7

“A deepened life of faith is possible even in the midst of the world”

First of all, a warm greeting to Latin America on the feast of our beloved Mother of Guadalupe. We need her especially in these days of worldwide tribulation and it is a great comfort to us to know that she will crush the head of the serpent (*cf. Gen 3:15*).

Let us repeat the essence of the meditations in the second week of Advent, which is now coming to an end. They wanted to give advice to deepen the inner life. This is to be done through:

- Meditation on the Word of God
- The contemplative prayer of the rosary
- The prayer of the heart
- Participation in a worthy celebration of Holy Mass with the reception of Holy Communion.
- Touching the realm of contemplation with the appropriate preparations (seeking silence, overcoming disordered attachments to this world and to persons...).

To take up the last theme:

Most people are not called to make such an intense renunciation of the world as the contemplative monastics. They live in this world and have taken on duties according to their status, which bring them very much into contact with transient things. However those who fulfil their duties are not separated from God because they are not sufficiently in silence and can withdraw enough

But we must also be vigilant, because it depends on how we fulfil our duties.

Father Gabriel, a Carmelite teacher writes on this subject:

“There are occupations and contact with creatures which belong to the duties of our state. They are an expression of the divine will, and therefore it is not to be thought that one should avoid them. If one keeps exactly to the measure demanded by the divine will, they can never form an obstacle to the union of the soul with God. One must only remain within the sphere of the divine will. In other words, contact with creatures and the various activities must have only one point of view:

the fulfilment of one's own duty. If, however, the inclination of the will attaches itself to these things and seeks in them a little personal satisfaction, such as curiosity or the natural need for love, the desire for recognition, the desire for the applause of others, etc., then one leaves the track of God's will, the heart attaches itself to the creatures and thus creates a real obstacle for oneself..."

An inner freedom from this world is indispensable for the deepening of the spiritual life. That is why Fr. Gabriel also speaks of the "inner cell" we have to look for. This is an expression also used by St. Catherine of Siena.

This "inner cell", which is even more important than the "outer cell", is formed if we have let the Lord into our heart and then encounter Him more deeply in our soul. We learn to be able to withdraw us into this "inner cell" where is our home and from there then to fulfil our tasks in him and not to be lost into the "outside-world".

It is essential that we overcome our attachment to the transient world and give our heart undivided to God. God will then lead the way for us to become ever more deeply united with Him.

Once again, it is very important to me to emphasise that the deepening and internalisation of our faith is in itself very essential. In the present confusion in the world and also in the Church, it becomes an urgent need. We remain sheltered in the heart of God and Our Lady on this journey. In the safety of the Lord we can then walk our path of following Christ and help those who are disoriented by what is happening around them!