

03. January 2021

“The great Love of our Father”

1 Jn 2:29-3:6

If you know that he is upright you must recognise that everyone whose life is upright is a child of his. You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children - which is what we are! The reason why the world does not acknowledge us is that it did not acknowledge him. My dear friends, we are already God's children, but what we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed. We are well aware that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is. Whoever treasures this hope of him purifies himself, to be as pure as he is. Whoever sins, acts wickedly, because all sin is wickedness. Now you are well aware that he has appeared in order to take sins away, and that in him there is no sin. No one who remains in him sins, and whoever sins has neither seen him nor recognised him.

NOTE: This is not the intended reading of the day, but it was taken from another reading year. Since I had already interpreted the text and only then noticed the mistake, I did not change it. I am sorry!

The great gift for us human beings is the love of God. Without it, no true life is possible, because it is the reason for our existence. That is why every human being - even if he may not be aware of it - hungers for love and if it is denied to him, his life dies and hardens.

No one knows this better than God Himself and so the heavenly Father tries to make His love known everywhere. All people should experience that a loving God accompanies their paths, who desires nothing more than that people recognise and respond to his love.

This text gives us a clear direction:

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children - which is what we are!”

This is a word with which we can set out with courage on our journey through this year, even though great shadows are discernible that threaten humanity.

Where does this shadow come from?

It comes from the great evil in this world, which is sin. All the darkness we perceive is the result of sin. Sin separates us from God, it attacks our reason for being, because it closes our receptivity to the love of God, which is our true life.

Just as the love of God is less and less understood, so sin is less understood. The result is a double blindness. We recognise less and less the light of God and fail to recognise the wickedness and danger of sin.

However, the clear knowledge of sin is important to understand what it means that Jesus came to take away the sin of the world. If sin is trivialised or relativised, then we cannot properly grasp the love of God, we cannot understand what it means that God came to this world specifically to redeem us, how he looks at us in infinite love and does not want to abandon us to the destruction of sin!

Instead, with the forgiveness of sin, he offers us a new life, a life that distances itself from sin! Sin is to be overcome in its destructive effect by the grace of God, all the structures of sin that have formed within us must be touched and transferred into the ordered life of grace! In this way our thoughts and feelings become more and more directed towards God and we are enabled to serve God and people in His Spirit!

Now “*we are already God's children*”, the text tells us, but there is still a much greater glory waiting for us, which is currently still hidden from us! This glory already begins when we start to live as children of God, when his Spirit works more and more in us and transforms us. Then the image of God unfolds in us and we notice how the virtues are allowed to grow, and our inner life reaches out more and more to God! How wonderful will it be in eternity?

We get an idea of this when we look at the Virgin Mary. Especially in her case we can see how the grace of God permeated her whole life! How her light will shine in glory!

This light also shines in the saints and we get an idea of how man is meant by God and what is waiting for us.

In the grace of God we can help to transform ourselves and become more and more what the Lord has called us to be. Day by day we need to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and be vigilant that we do not allow ourselves to be seduced by sin.

Our “inner master”, which is the Holy Spirit, can teach us to remain in Jesus and to notice the slightest deviations. We only have to ask him and enter into an inner exchange with him. Let us not forget that Jesus sent him to us as a comforter (*cf. Jn 16:7*) who leads us into all truth (*cf. Jn 16:13*).

Let us take this important hint with us and let it penetrate deeply: “*see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children - which is what we are!*”

We can rely on this word and face the challenges of this year that has begun with a spirit of strength. The Lamb of God will lead us if we remain faithful and in Him!

Come Lord Jesus, Marantha!