

11. January 2020

“The Maid of Orleans and the Army of the Lamb”

Short review

We have dedicated three programmes to St. Joan of Arc. Every day we pray in our community that we may better understand her mission and that her honor may be fully established.

Why do we pray in this way?

As already mentioned in the last broadcasts, Joan of Arc was often not properly understood. One could not imagine that God would intervene in the course of history in such a way and bring about such a change in a wartime event through a young girl. This continues to this day.

If one tries to explain the coming of the Maid of Orleans with purely human ideas, one is soon at the end of one's possibilities, as well as tempted to reach for theses which are not able to grasp what happened. In the worst case, the saint and her visions can be classified in the realm of mental confusion or simply denied any influence on the events of the time. The English, with whom the French king had to deal, could and wanted to explain the turn in this war only through the influence of the devil. It was therefore logical for them to want to see the Virgin condemned as a witch, which would both destroy her reputation and cast a shadow on Charles VII, as we have heard in the last meditations.

From the light of faith, however, we can see God's wisdom precisely in the election of Joan of Arc. It pleases the Lord to choose what is weak before the world in order to glorify Himself. Everyone could see that this girl from Lorraine was not humanly capable of carrying out such a mission. *“You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last”* (Jn 15:16) said the Lord.

Those vocations are coming from God and we don't know what criteria he uses to do it. But one criterion should be transparent. The Lord looked into the heart of Joan and knew that it burned for him. The Lord desires the participation of the person he chooses for his ministry. His criteria are obviously not primarily the natural gifts, but the faithfulness of the heart, the depth of his love for God.

The most beautiful and deepest thing we can say about Jeanne is that she loved God and gave him all her response and dedication of life. From this starting point, the soul of the Virgin of Orleans opens up, now we can learn to understand her. Her love and her trust made it possible for God to do these works through her, that she could fulfill her mission and, in the fulfilment of her mission, was even capable to suffer that death of which she was so afraid before.

In Joan lived the spirit of strength. It is that gift of the Holy Spirit which, with our consent, allows God to lead us beyond our earthly limits and to love God more than ourselves.

When we honour Joan's wonderful response to God's call, then we honour God first and foremost. We apply to Jeanne those words which the Virgin Mary speaks in the incomparable Magnificat. "*He has looked upon the humiliation of his servant*" (Lk 1:48), as Our Lady confesses with joy and humility. In comparison, we can say that God also looked down on his "daughter Joan" and blessed her with this great mission of liberating her people.

Jeanne's glory is therefore God's glory. Therefore it is important that in the reports and testimonies about her and her life the glory and wisdom of God shines out so that this unusual mission is understood in God's light. If we diminish Joan' honor, then we diminish the honor that God is entitled to through her mission. The honor of Joan is the honor of God.

We try to grasp more deeply the significant mission of Jeanne, especially in these days. We are currently experiencing difficult days in this world, because dark antichristian clouds are gathering.

It seems that people, without realizing it, are increasingly coming under pressure from governments and large organizations - as we understand as Christians - that have taken a hostile direction.

Today is certainly not the time to gather an army in the manner of Joan of Arc and to defend ourselves against the enemy as she did. The enemy is not a particular nation occupying the country. No, the enemy is global! It is a spirit that rebels against God and wants to take over the reign itself. He uses people and their inclinations, their blindness, to carry out his plans through them.

The army that is being gathered today is the "army of the Lamb" which is learning to fight with spiritual weapons against those forces that mankind wants to get

under control in all aspects. The courage and humility of St. Joan is needed to defend oneself against this invisible enemy, but also to attack him with spiritual means.

There is no doubt that "La Pucelle" (The Maid) with the angels will be on the side of the faithful in this struggle and will thwart all attempts that a "false king" may gain dominion over us, because her mission does not end in heaven. Moreover, she will teach the Lamb's army not to be discouraged by an apparently oppressive superiority and assure us that the angels and the saints will fight with us. This mission of hers becomes all the more important the more a spiritual occupation takes possession of people.

Our daily prayer should therefore help us to deepen our love for God and for his daughter Jeanne and to perceive even more strongly her concrete help today in this spiritual battle in which she continues her mission. We hope that our last meditations have served this purpose.