

7. May 2021

**“You are my friends, if you do what I command you”**

Today there are two smaller reflections that are aligned with each other. One is from the Gospel of the day, the other as it should be done on every 7th of the month, from “The Father’s Message” of Madre Eugenia.

*First the gospel of the day:*

***Jn 15:12-17***

***This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know the master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. My command to you is to love one another.***

As we looked at yesterday, Jesus called us to remain in His love by keeping His commandments. The Father's heart is thus opened to us and true joy enters us. This is how the friendship between God and us is born. It is a friendship of incomparable depth, for it is friendship with God to which we are invited. The basis of this friendship is love - the ineffable love of God for us, that precedes everything (*cf. 1 Jn 4:10*), and our beginning and growing love as our response.

In today's text, the Lord sets before us the greatness of this love and what He expects of us: *“love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.”*

So we are to be able to love one another in the same love as the Lord has loved us. This becomes possible when we grow in love and give room to the Holy Spirit within us. Only the Holy Spirit is able to remove everything in us that stands in the way of the development of love. The commandment of the Lord - like all the commandments of God - is also to be fulfilled with His grace and requires our cooperation. Also the love for our brother, which should be that of Jesus - and He gave His life for His friends - is not only a natural love and affection, but a supernatural love, which the Lord allows to grow in us when we are ready for it.

*“You are my friends, if you do what I command you.”*

In yesterday's text, the basis for remaining in the love of Jesus was keeping the commandments of God. There is also a condition for friendship with Jesus. The friendship with Jesus and its development is bound to fulfil His will. This is a very important statement. It clearly shows, for example, that human friendships or a general brotherhood and friendship do not in themselves mean friendship with Jesus. It is precisely this dimension that is missing, which is addressed here by the Lord. It is good that we as Christians perceive this well, so that we do not fall into the euphoria of a general brotherhood and friendship of all people and overlook the conditions for a true friendship with God.

Friendship with Jesus unfolds in the joint fulfilment of the Father's will. This is His food (*cf. Jn 4:34*)! Just as the Father sent Him, He sends His disciples - to fulfil the Father's mission (*cf. Jn 20:21*). Those who have entered into this friendship are told by the Lord everything that He has learnt from His Father. They have the mission to show people the true way to the brotherhood of all people, which does not grow out of nature or come about through human effort, but through communion with God, obeying His commandments and fulfilling what He asks us to do.

*Words from “The Father’s Message”:*

***However, what I do require is the faithful observance of the commandments I gave the Church, so that you will be rational creatures and will not be like animals because of your lack of discipline and your evil inclinations, so that you will preserve the treasure which is the soul I gave you, clothed in the fullness of its divine beauty!***

***As for you, souls in a state of sin, or who are ignorant of religious truth, I will not be able to enter you; however, I will be close to you, because I never stop calling you, inviting you to desire to receive the benefits I bring you, so that you may see the light and be healed of sin.***

We can easily perceive the relationship of the Father's words with the texts from John's Gospel of yesterday and today. The original beauty of our soul, with which God has clothed us out of infinite goodness, can only be preserved and unfold if man faithfully obeys the commandments of God. Only then is the soul able to receive the love of God, which is its nourishment.

We can, by the grace of God, regain the “beauty of the first day” and let that, which has been wounded, be healed by the love of God. The soul is strengthened because it now abides in love. Day by day it becomes more beautiful and lighter. Whoever has met such people knows what I am talking about. They are those souls who radiate a supernatural presence of God, that joy of the Lord spoken of yesterday in the Gospel.

In the second short text, two points are mentioned that prevent God from taking up residence in the soul, that is, from entering into a special friendship. The dimension of sin is clear to us, but religious error also does not allow God to enter the soul. Religious error also means - as it says in other passages of the book - other religions. This is important to realise, because there is an increasing tendency in the Catholic Church to regard other religions as valid ways of salvation. However, they are not, even though there are elements of truth in them that one can be glad in. But as a religion they do not lead to God, but need the encounter with the Saviour. Since this has not yet happened, the Father cannot penetrate them either, even though He constantly calls and accompanies them so that they may recognise the true light.