

9. January 2023



On the discernment of spirits  
(Part II)

Today we return to the meditation of 7 January on the discernment of spirits. Therefore, although this is not the reading of the day, we will listen again to a passage from the Letter of St. John:

1 Jn 4:1-6

*My dear friends, not every spirit is to be trusted, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets are at large in the world. This is the proof of the spirit of God: any spirit which acknowledges Jesus Christ, come in human nature, is from God, and no spirit which fails to acknowledge Jesus is from God; it is the spirit of Antichrist, whose coming you have heard of; he is already at large in the world. Children, you are from God and have overcome them, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world, and therefore the world inspires what they say, and listens to them. We are from God; whoever recognises God listens to us; anyone who is not from God refuses to listen to us. This is how we can distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of falsehood.*

This passage from the letter of John exhorts us to examine whether the spirits are of God....

As I mentioned in my meditation the day before yesterday, this discernment has to be carried out with great precision, because the spirit of Antichrist is not only at work wherever it is denied that Jesus is the Christ; but it manifests itself whenever and wherever the doctrine we have received from God through His Church is attacked, relativised or, in the worst case, denied; that is, wherever error is proliferated.

The day before yesterday I explained that in no way would one be attempting against charity by calling a spade a spade and pointing out sin for what it really is... The same

is true of error, which must also be clearly pointed out. In doing so, one is not pronouncing a moral judgement on the person in error, nor is one condemning him or her; one is simply stating the objective situation from the perspective of our Catholic faith.

Take, for example, theological errors and false doctrines that deviate from the teaching of the Church. It is denied, for example, that Christ really rose from the dead; or the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is questioned; or the virginity of Mary or other articles of our faith are denied... How disastrous are the consequences of these errors among the faithful! What if, for example, seminarians are inculcated with these false doctrines? What will be the repercussions for future generations of priests? There is no doubt that it is the spirit of Antichrist at work there! Indeed, he is already in the world, as St. John tells us in his letter.

All this must be clearly pointed out, and pastors must warn their faithful of such doctrinal errors. If they fail to do so, they would no longer be protecting their flock and could end up becoming co-operators with the spirit of Antichrist.

We must listen to the authentic doctrine of the Church and follow the teaching of the Apostles as we have received it by Tradition. We cannot be under any illusions! We must realise that the Church is increasingly under attack by the spirit of Antichrist, which is trying to infiltrate it. But the most serious thing would be if those who have the responsibility for the People of God were not aware of this and did not discern it correctly... If this were the case, the faithful themselves would have to discern the spirits, under the guidance of those few pastors who have not compromised with the spirit of the world.

Finally, I would like to clarify in this context what I mean by "separation of the spirits". What we have said with regard to the discernment of spirits is the part that pertains to us humans, according to the exhortation of the Apostle John: *"Not every spirit is to be trusted, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God"*.

The "separation of the spirits", on the other hand, means - from my point of view - that visible and clear dissociation between light and darkness. In chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus speaks about the Last Judgement, he states *that "the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the upright"* (Mt 13:49).

I hope and pray that God will send his angels, so that the confusion that is currently rampant in the Church will come to an end. In other words, may the angels help to bind that anti-Christian spirit, which in various ways has crept into the Church, so that it can no longer exert its influence. The Catholic faithful need to be clear about what is and what is not Catholic; about what is truth and what is error; about what is morally good and what is morally bad; about what is good for ecumenism and what is not; about which pastors are really fulfilling their mission and which have become hirelings (cf. Jn 10:11-13)....

Since we are so susceptible to error, it is fitting that it should be the holy angels who separate the light from the darkness, because they act in perfect union with God. It is the angels who do the separating of the spirits; it is they who unmask the work of the demons; it is they, as members of the Church triumphant, who come in haste to the aid of the Church militant, to drive away the evil spirits, and to prevent the mingling of light and darkness.