

13. March 2023

LENTEN ITINERARY

Day 20: "Passive purification"

As we progress on our path of discipleship and the Lord sees that we take it seriously and strive for holiness, He responds to our efforts by sending us so-called "passive purifications".

There are those who are frightened just by hearing this word. They are not aware that it is a sign of great love and care on the part of our Father. Purification means that our capacity to love is to be awakened and strengthened and, at the same time, that we are to rid ourselves of all that hinders us from responding fully to God's love. Therefore, purification is a grace, which usually goes hand in hand with the intensification of inner prayer and the passage into contemplation.

Certain inner defects and attitudes we are unable to overcome by our own efforts. Perhaps we are not even aware that we have them. *"Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults"* - says the psalmist (Ps 18:13).

God takes a soul seeking holiness very seriously, because she has declared her love for the Lord. And now He wants to adorn her with virtues and make the fruits of the Holy Spirit unfold in her life.

What does our Father do if He sees that, for example, the soul is not able to overcome her pride, despite all her efforts? God then allows certain circumstances in this person's life, which break his pride. The Lord knows how to do this. If the soul really strives for holiness, in the course of time she will learn to read these signs, for the Lord will repeatedly give her such lessons, refining them more and more, in order to give it the opportunity to get rid of pride and to overcome it little by little.

The Lord does the same with regard to other faults. It is as the Book of Proverbs says: *"A furnace for silver, a foundry for gold, but the Lord for the testing of hearts!"* (Prov 17:3).

Therefore, it would be truly regrettable if we did not understand this language of God and let the opportunities offered to us pass us by.

This process of purification is called "passive" because it is not we ourselves who choose the circumstances and the manner, but we leave them in the hands of our divine Master. We would hardly choose them for ourselves, for such purification processes can be quite painful.

Suffering often results from our attachments and false bonds... Suppose, for example, that we have wrongly attached ourselves to a certain person and the Lord clearly shows us that we have to detach ourselves from that person. Logically it will be painful! The same goes for the purification of impatience, which may be deeply rooted in us and which will bring suffering to be uprooted; and, even more so, for the purification of those selfishnesses that have taken root in our life...

Who could rid us of it all? No matter how sincere our efforts, we would not be able to get rid of it all by ourselves. But God is always ready to come to our aid, if we entrust ourselves to Him so that He may lead us to the freedom of the children of God and enable us to abandon ourselves completely to His love.

Whatever, for the love of God, we allow to be purified in us during our earthly life, will no longer have to be purified after death. Therefore, we should not view passive purification as if it were a terrifying spectre. Rather, it is an expression of the Father's great love for all those who want to walk the path of holiness. Through trust, we know that, if we follow this path - and it is not so much a question of what we ourselves have to do, but rather of letting God do it and giving Him our response - then we will grow in love and come to know the Lord better.

Meditation on the reading of the day: <http://en.elijamission.net/2022/03/21/>

Meditation on the Gospel of the day: <http://en.elijamission.net/2021/03/08/>