



23. June 2024

A New Creation

2 Cor 5:14-17

'For the love of Christ overwhelms us when we consider that if one man died for all, then all have died; his purpose in dying for all humanity was that those who live should live not any more for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life. From now onwards, then, we will not consider anyone by human standards: even if we were once familiar with Christ according to human standards, we do not know him in that way any longer. So for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old order is gone and a new being is there to see!'

To live for Christ and in Christ... This is the secret of the new life, of the new creation!

Thanks to the witness of Sacred Scripture, we know so many miracles: resurrection of the dead (cf. e.g. Lk 7:11-17), healing of the paralyzed (cf. e.g. Mk 2:1-12), deliverance of the possessed (cf. e.g. Mk 5:1-20), and so many others through which God shows us His goodness. Nor can we forget the miracle of Creation that surrounds us every day... We would certainly never finish enumerating all that in which God glorifies Himself. In this Sunday's first reading (taken from the book of Job), we hear the following words:

"Who pent up the sea behind closed doors when it leapt tumultuous from the womb, when I wrapped it in a robe of mist and made black clouds its swaddling bands; when I cut out the place I had decreed for it and imposed gates and a bolt? 'Come so far,' I said, 'and no further; here your proud waves must break!'" (Job 38:8-11)

If we have eyes to see and ears to hear, we will never cease to praise God, and in eternity we will be able to offer it to Him together with the angels and saints without hindrance. What a wonderful prospect!

But of the Lord's countless miracles, today's reading describes one of the greatest: it is the miracle of God's love for us, manifested in His coming into the world (cf. Jn 3:16); and the "new creation" that is granted to us through baptism; the participation in the

immortality of the Son of God. This “new creation” is totally glorious, since it participates in the life of God!

Now, it is up to us how this gift of God unfolds in our earthly life. We all know that passage of Scripture which says that the angels in heaven rejoice when a sinner is converted (cf. Lk 15:10), when he passes from death to life (cf. Lk 15:32).

And indeed, what a transformation a person can undergo by the grace of God when he begins to live in Christ, when the “old life” really dies, when he no longer lives for himself but for Christ! The shadows of the “old life” begin to fall away; the new life begins to grow.

Even if we have been blessed with the objective reality of being a “new creation”, there is usually a long way to go, until we are inwardly transformed and can overcome our deep-seated tendency to self-possession and live for Christ. The decisive question here is the way of transformation in Christ. The “new life” wants to blossom, to transform the whole person and model him or her on the image of Christ.

Unfortunately, too little is taught about this way of inner transformation of man, but it is so essential! For the supernatural life to unfold fully in us, it is not enough to know our faith well, receive the sacraments and occasionally do good works. To live in Christ means to love as He loves, to act as He acts, to think as He thinks, so that day by day the Lord takes more and more form in us.

Our life as a “new creation” cannot be adapted to the thinking and feeling of this world, which is often totally opposed to the commandments of God. The standard for believers is always the Lord Himself, and their actions are to be determined by the Holy Spirit.

Such a way becomes a profound process of transformation, which seeks to set aside everything that stands in the way of Christ's loving dominion in us. Thus St. Paul exhorts us in the Letter to the Colossians:

“Let your thoughts be on things above, not on the things that are on the earth, and do not lie to each other. You have stripped off your old behaviour with your old self, and you have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its Creator; and in that image there is no room for distinction between Greek and Jew,

between the circumcised and uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free. There is only Christ: he is everything and he is in everything. As the chosen of God, then, the holy people whom he loves, you are to be clothed in heartfelt compassion, in generosity and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other if one of you has a complaint against another. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.”
(Col 3:2.9-13)

Therefore, we must rid ourselves of “*human anger, hot temper, malice, abusive language and dirty talk*” (Ibid. v. 8) and follow St. Paul's exhortation: “*Over all these clothes, put on love, the perfect bond. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts*” (Ibid. v. 14-15a)