

26. October 2024

## Love of truth

Eph 4:7-16

*Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.*

First of all, the apostle speaks of the various ministries that God has provided for the building up of the body of Christ. All are to work together so that "*we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God*".

Unfortunately, we have to stop here and lament with St Paul that this is not the case today... It is obvious that not a few Catholics no longer take the binding teaching of the Church so seriously. We hear more and more statements and see actions that are at a discrepancy with the Magisterium and the Gospel. But when there is no 'unity in the faith', the knowledge of the Son of God is obscured and a shadow hangs over the Church. This, in turn, prevents us from reaching '*to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*'.

Therefore, if we want the words of St Paul to become a reality, we must be very careful to remain faithful to the teaching and tradition of the Church, so that we are not at the mercy of deception or led into error. It is part of the maturity of a person to be able to

hold fast to what he has come to know as truth and not to allow it to be called into question (e.g. by theological speculation, false compassion or other circumstances).

It should be clearly noted that many false teachers are now appearing who want to adapt the Church's thinking and actions to the world. They do not like it when the Church clings to what they consider to be outdated positions because "the world thinks differently today". Such people confuse the faithful, especially when they themselves are called to serve in a special way to build up the Body of Christ.

St Paul gives us the decisive advice for dealing with such difficult situations: live the truth in charity, he tells us in today's reading.

Certainly we could - with the Apostle's consent - define this attitude as 'love of the truth'. To hold fast to doctrine, and thus to the truth, is an expression of great love and faithfulness to God. This is precisely what God wanted of His people: that they should remain faithful to Him, to His Word, to His promise, to His declaration of love for them.

To be rooted in the truth means, in the words of Saint Paul, no longer to be "*children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine*". Then the truth, which is Jesus Himself (cf. Jn 14:6), will take root in us and sustain us when deception and lies come our way. It will be our divine friend - the Holy Spirit - who will then remind us of what the Lord has said (cf. Jn 14:26), so that we will be able to turn away from deception.

Our response to all heresies will be this: Moved by charity, we want to live in the truth. And this truth is contained in Scripture and in the Magisterium. No one can change it, "*even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed*" (Gal 1:8). Besides, it would be a fallen angel to whom we would not listen anyway.