



15. March 2025

MEDITATIONS FOR LENT

“Discretion applied to the situation of the Church”

The aim of our Lenten meditations is to become better disciples of the Lord, disciples who, with great conviction, bear witness to the love of our Father in these difficult times. His love has been revealed to us in a unique way in His Son Jesus Christ.

Thanks to the Desert Fathers, we have come to know the term "discretion", which has a broad meaning related to "discernment of spirits". Discretion thus helps us to distinguish prudently between the good and the bad, the true and the false, the authentic and the artificial. Later we will apply this concept to the spiritual life as well, when we look at how we can live our spiritual life wisely so that it bears much fruit.

But first we need to remember what it is that we are called to proclaim to humanity as disciples of the Lord. As Catholics, we have always been clear about what that message is. We rely on Scripture, Tradition and the authentic Magisterium of the Church. So we are on "safe ground", as the virtue of discretion suggests, and we can go back to the Apostles and all that the Church has faithfully handed down through the centuries to the present day. This solid foundation protects us from error.

Today, however, we are faced with a problem that we cannot ignore. The leadership of the Church, and with it the faithful, has fallen into an existential crisis. During this pontificate, the crisis has become so serious that it has given rise to various errors and false doctrines that disfigure the face of the Church.

Some insist that this crisis goes back a long way, claiming that the problem has its origins in Vatican II. Others, on the other hand, point out that the Council has been misinterpreted in such a way that certain passages of its documents have been used in a certain direction, leading to the present crisis. Others do not see the crisis at all and even believe that the current pontiff is on the right path and is simply being misinterpreted.

I do not intend to enter into this debate in all the daily meditations until we return to the Gospel of John. However, in the context of discernment of spirits and therefore of

discretion, it is necessary to point out the deviations that have unfortunately become the subject of proclamation within the Catholic Church. As disciples and apostles of the Lord, we are committed to the truth which He has entrusted to His Church. And when that truth is violated, whether in doctrine or in practice, corrections must be made. So far, no such corrections have been made, allowing the poison of false doctrine and practice to spread throughout the body of the Church. Since these confusions come from and are promoted by church leaders, a particularly complex situation has arisen which must be dealt with in the Spirit of the Lord. Those who teach false doctrine must know that the faithful cannot follow them. Indeed, there is no obligation to obey error, but rather to resist it properly.

Why is it so important to address this issue? Because the disciples of the Lord must not proclaim false doctrine or relativise the truth. Rather, they must proclaim the Lord as the only Saviour of mankind in season and out of season. They cannot remain silent out of human respect when it is time to confess.

This proclamation has become more difficult in the sense that the faithful often no longer have the support of the ecclesiastical authorities. For the most part, they have lost their way and support the wrong course that proceeds from the current head of the Church, of whom Monsignor Héctor Aguer, Archbishop Emeritus of La Plata in Argentina, says the following: "He does not preach about the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, but promotes a horizontal humanism in line with the globalist agenda." This cannot be the task of the disciples, who have been commissioned by the Lord to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth (Mt 28:19-20).

So, if we want to consolidate our discipleship in this Lenten season, we must - unfortunately - also address the irregularities in the Church. It is these that have distorted her witness almost beyond recognition. It is these that are causing the Church to sink into irrelevance. The poison of modernism has penetrated deeply into her and is spreading like a cancerous tumour throughout her organism.

In our journey on the virtue of discretion, the German philosopher Dietrich von Hildebrand will accompany us to discover some aspects of the discernment of spirits. In the introduction to his book *The Devastated Vineyard*, Hildebrand speaks of a "fifth column", referring to a group of clerics who are deliberately destroying the Church in a kind of conspiracy. They are priests, theologians and bishops who have lost their faith

but remain in the Church. They present themselves as saviours of the Church in the modern world and work hand in hand with Freemasons and Communists to destroy the Mystical Body of Christ from within. Next, Hildebrand talks about the group of those who want to change the Church into something completely contrary to its true nature. By stripping it of its supernatural character, by secularising and desacralising it, they want to turn it into a humanitarian institution. This group uses the same camouflage as the enemies of the Church, presenting their reforms as progress and adaptation to the mentality of modern man.

It is not difficult to see that this is exactly what the present Church hierarchy is trying to do. The following meditations will make this even clearer, so that the disciple of the Lord is prepared for spiritual resistance and can exercise discretion.