

30 May 2025

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

“The witness of the apostles and the present crisis of mission”

(II)

Before we continue to accompany St. Paul through the remaining chapters of the Acts of the Apostles and prepare ourselves for the approaching Solemnity of Pentecost, let us return to the theme we started yesterday and dwell on the consequences that result when we cease to consider Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of the world and no longer proclaim Him with the zeal of the apostles, as the Church had done throughout the centuries with great fidelity.

If we look at the present situation of the Church with regard to the mission entrusted to her, we have to note that certain circles, even up to the highest hierarchy, no longer feel committed to the missionary mandate of Jesus in the same way as the Church did from the beginning.

Before returning to the ‘Abu Dhabi Declaration’, it is worth listening to the statements made by Monsignor Bruno Forte, Archbishop of Chieti-Vasto, on 4 April 2022 at a conference at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome, under the theme ‘Next steps in the Jewish-Catholic dialogue’. We will see that, in this case, the dialogue with the representatives of this religion is no longer aimed at finding the most appropriate ways of transmitting the Lord's message to the Jews and bringing them to faith in Him, but is rather a renunciation of the mission.

Archbishop Bruno Forte, representing the Catholic Church, explained that it would no longer be necessary for Jews to accept Jesus as their Redeemer in order to be saved. He urged all Christian denominations to take this seriously, following the example of the Catholic Church. This would mean that there should no longer be a mission to the Jews. Rather, one should work hand in hand with them to build a better world.

Let us listen carefully: in contrast to the apostles, who proclaimed the Messiah to the Jews, for whom He had suffered and died, this archbishop suggests that the Jews no longer need the Lord to save them. Unfortunately, this is not the private opinion of a

misguided bishop, but we must assume that it has become a commonly accepted trend in the Church. Added to this is the exhortation to the other Christian confessions to follow the example of the Church to 'put an end to the active mission to the Jews'. Monsignor Forte is speaking on behalf of the Catholic Church!

Such statements are almost grotesque after what we have read in recent weeks in the Acts of the Apostles. What would St. Paul and the apostles say about this? Certainly they would consider it a betrayal of the Lord and pronounce their 'anathema'.

This is not only about the crisis in the Church, but also about the fact that, at heart, the missionary mandate of Jesus is to be eliminated and, to make matters worse, other Christians are being incited to do the same. Here one can identify the spirit of lies and deception at work, in order to exclude the Jews from salvation in Christ.

While these statements by Archbishop Bruno Forte constitute a deception of the Jews, the Abu Dhabi Declaration and Francis' statements in Singapore affect the global mission. As a reminder, I quote briefly from the two statements:

'The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings.'

"All religions are paths to reach God. They are—to make a comparison—like different languages, different dialects, to get there. But God is God for everyone".

We are confronted here with a relativisation of the missionary mandate of Christians, because, if all religions are equally dear to God and all lead to Him, what would be the point of the Church's mission to announce Jesus Christ as Redeemer to all men? Perhaps the protagonists of such apostate declarations replace this with the hope that the encounter between religions will make them mutually fruitful, that they will cooperate for peace and a better world, that they will build a universal fraternity and other similar goals. But these goals are not in line with what Jesus told the apostles in His missionary mandate: it is the eternal salvation of souls that is at stake.

If we consider Archbishop Bruno Forte's statements as a betrayal of Jesus' mission to His people, then the relativistic statements in the Abu Dhabi document and Francis' statements in Singapore constitute, on an objective level, a betrayal of the Church's

missionary mandate for all humanity. Through such official pronouncements by prominent representatives of the Church and even its head, people are being misled and deprived of the authentic proclamation of the Gospel. It is clear that this cannot be the intention of the Holy Spirit, who impelled the apostles to proclaim the Gospel with great authority.

Among other things that have seriously affected various areas of ecclesial life, this unbearable burden on the Church's mission has been left as a legacy of the last pontificate. Correcting all these errors would be a hard but unpostponable task that an orthodox pope would have to undertake in order for the Catholic faith to be proclaimed once again as the Holy Spirit intended. The authenticity of the new pontificate will be demonstrated if Leo XIV is willing to lead the Church back to the right path.