

12. December 2022

Advent in apocalyptic times
Part IV: "The shadows over the Holy Church"

NOTE: We resume today's series on "Advent in Apocalyptic Times." If anyone prefers to listen to a meditation on the reading or the Gospel of the day, you can find it at the following link: <http://en.elijamission.net/the-question-of-authority/>

In the meditations of December 9 and 10, we had focused on the darkness we see around us. Although it is undoubtedly dense darkness, it should not lead us to surrender, to a fatalistic attitude, as if we could not defend ourselves against it. We must also be clear that, behind all the darkness of the estrangement from God, there are the powers of darkness, which want to turn men away from the way of the Lord or, at least, making that journey more difficult for them.

It is precisely here that faith comes to our aid and the Lord gives us the key, telling us: *"When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand"* (Lk 21:28).

Therefore, we must lift up our heads. God does not allow darkness to expand without at the same time including it in His plan of salvation. Therefore, we must try to see the darkness that hovers over people from God's perspective. Then we will immediately notice that it comes from the fact that men abandon God's way. From this perspective, we will have the key to understanding events and responding appropriately to them.

Just as on a personal level our life falls under the dominion of evil when we transgress God's commandments, so it is also in the life of the nations. But, in order to gain a realistic view of the present situation in the world, it is necessary to take a look at the crisis in our Holy Church.

Shadows loom over the Holy Church.

It is evident that we live in apocalyptic times, in which anti-Christian influence has penetrated deeply into society and, unfortunately, also into our Church. This is particularly tragic, because the Church should be the spiritual bulwark from which the

greatest resistance should come. However, the call to conversion and penance is rarely heard in the Church, and there is a lack of clear instructions for the faithful on how to deal with this anti-Christian influence. One wonders whether the Church is even identifying the anti-Christian powers as such. One gets the impression that she is no longer correctly applying the discernment of spirits, which would be so necessary in these times, and that she has largely lost her prophetic dimension.

At present, those who teach things contrary to the doctrine of the Church and question her moral teaching on basic points, can move freely on "ecclesiastical soil", without being corrected; while those faithful who want to remain faithful to Tradition and doctrine are easily marginalized. A course has been embarked upon that is intended to be legitimized by the Second Vatican Council and the so-called "spirit of the Council". However, the Bride of Christ is increasingly stripped of her beauty and transcendence. Under the premise of inclusiveness, they want to make room for everything in the Church, but they do not realize that they are also opening wide the doors for the anti-Christian spirit, which infects the Mystical Body of Christ, to penetrate her.

It is important not to close our eyes when wolves break into the flock and only a few shepherds are left to protect the sheep entrusted to them.

The almost unlimited openness to the world and its institutions makes, for example, the Supreme Authority of the Church exhort the faithful to submit to the United Nations, the WHO, the European Parliament; institutions whose policies have a strongly anti-Christian tendency. Such statements are puzzling, especially considering that these institutions promote anti-life policies, and thus are contrary to the mission and principles of the Church.

“Behold: though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples, on you the Lord is rising and over you his glory can be seen” (Is 60:2).

If we are already confronted with this darkness, the second part of Isaiah's words will also be fulfilled: “On you the Lord is rising and over you his glory can be seen”.

It is precisely in these apocalyptic times that we are exhorted to be light of the world (Mt 5:14). Times of darkness must arouse resistance on our part, and we must rid

ourselves of all lukewarmness in order to be instruments of the Lord. We should not be intimidated by the fact that only a few really recognize the seriousness of the situation.

Fidelity to the Gospel and to the authentic doctrine of the Church is an indispensable requirement for counteracting the powers of darkness. Half measures are no longer valid here. The Lord wants to shine His light through our lives. Concern for humanity and suffering at the present state of the Church should not discourage us, but should move us to cling even more closely to the Lord.

As faithful, we are called to respond on three levels to this crisis in the world and in the Church:

1) To pray with perseverance for the conversion of all, and to seize every opportunity to proclaim the Gospel. This includes also the small sacrifices that we can offer for this cause. We must know that, with each person who converts to the Lord, a prey of the kingdom of darkness will have been snatched away. Moreover, this converted person will begin to serve the Lord and will try, in turn, to bring more people to Christ.

2) To deepen our own conversion day by day and to intensify our prayer. The more room we give the Lord to dwell in our hearts, the more fruitful our lives will be, and the more God's love will be able to reach people through us.

3) Aware that, after all, it is the spirits of evil who are behind all darkness, we must consciously engage in combat against them and offer them resistance.

With tomorrow's meditation we will close this series of "Advent in Apocalyptic Times".