

Tenth Meditation on the Holy Spirit

Chastity

Holy Spirit, today I come to you with a special request which darkens the lives of many people.

The sense of chastity has been lost and for too many people it seems to be a relic of times gone by. If one speaks of it, one is often met with complete incomprehension, and even in ecclesiastical circles it not infrequently evokes a pitiful smile. Yet chastity is a fruit of life with You and a glorious gift that strengthens the dignity of the person immensely!

Why, O Holy Spirit, are we so little receptive to the beauty of chastity? Do we no longer have eyes to perceive the dignity of chastity? Have we already become so sexualised and thus indifferent to perceive its nobility, its inner strength, the integrity of a virgin?

Chastity does not mean a tense relationship to the sphere of sexuality, a fearful blocking of all natural impulses or the absence of any attraction to this vital area, but it does mean the ability to deal with it in a sensitive way.

Chastity, which covers much more than the sexual sphere alone, is an inner school of the spirit, leading to abstinence in the wider sense. It is like an inner compass to deal with the sensual sphere of man in such a way that it does not gain dominion over the higher values of human existence. Chastity, then, implies a prudent asceticism, and, at the same time, is part of it.

Chastity will teach us to understand sexuality in God's perspective. Within marriage, it will enable us to live the sexual sphere as an expression of true love, so that, in the loving and respectful treatment of each other, the pleasure that sexuality entails is also integrated. In the time before marriage, chastity teaches waiting and thus preserves the whole and undivided capacity for love, for the one to whom this human love is to belong completely in the future. In chastity for the sake of the Kingdom of God, the whole sphere of sexuality is consciously given to God and thus undergoes a transformation, a spiritualisation.

How far, O Holy Spirit, is practice often removed from this height and beauty, and how much suffering arises from it! People sell the beauty of their soul and the integrity of their person so easily and do not even notice it! Nor do they notice how this weakens them in their capacity to love.

And what a bombardment of unchastity the adolescents are exposed to! And, O Holy Spirit, let it be lamented to Thee: in some countries our schoolchildren are systematically brought into contact with this so important sphere in the most disgusting way through educational schemes.

Let us discover chastity anew! And if we have fallen into the trap of unchastity in our lives and the Lord has led us out of it in His grace, then we can gain a new chastity which removes the disorder in us and gives us a new dignity and beauty, namely the splendour of the Holy Spirit in us.