

29. July

Novena to God the Father

Day 1: "God is love"

Over the next 9 days we will hear short meditations on our Heavenly Father, interspersed with songs in His honour. Some faithful Catholics celebrate a feast in honour of the Heavenly Father, the Father of all Mankind, every 7th August. This feast dates back to a request He made to Mother Eugenia Ravasio in 1932. This private revelation was carefully examined and approved by the local bishop of the diocese where the events took place. I myself came across this message several years ago and found it very valuable in helping me to deepen my relationship with God the Father.

The original message was dictated in Latin and is a declaration of the Heavenly Father's love for mankind.

It is essential for us human beings to understand God's love better and to let it enter our hearts. Then we will be able to assimilate more deeply that we are the beloved children of God. And this certainty then becomes a strong support for our life, because on God's love we can build our house as on a firm rock. When we become aware that we are loved by God, we will not lose heart even in difficult situations in life.

The meditations of the next nine days are not so much doctrinal teachings. They are simple words meant to touch the heart. There is nothing greater, nothing more beautiful, nothing more important for our lives than to open our hearts to God, who longs to share His love with us and for us to love Him in return!

If the music and words of this series of meditations help us to know our heavenly Father better, it will be a source of immense joy to us.

God is love!

This affirmation is the essence of the whole message of Scripture. We can nod our heads and repeat with all our hearts: "God is love!" With this we have already pronounced the

great truth of all existence, and now it is necessary to continue to understand it in all its aspects, which will be revealed to us both in time and in eternity.

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" and "God saw that (...) it was very good" (Gen 1:26,31).

This is what the Old Testament teaches us: God created us in His image and likeness, fashioning us according to the fullness of His love. Our heavenly Father is love in His very being; and everything He does is out of love and is permeated by that love.'

"God is light and in him is no darkness at all" (1 Jn 1:5). His every intention is perfectly pure, for true love does not pursue its own interests.

God, our Father, is all-powerful and all-loving.

The fallen angel, Lucifer, longed to attain God's omnipotence, but not His absolute goodness. But God's omnipotence is revealed precisely in His boundless goodness. This is how the Father reveals Himself to us in His mercy.

How can we know God?

We can know the inmost part of His being through love, thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit. If we live in a close and trusting relationship with Him, we will realize with increasing clarity that *"God first loved us"* (1 Jn 4:19).

God, our Father, wants to forgive; God wants to save; God wants to redeem; God wants to bring all things to fulfilment in Himself... God wants to live in the midst of His children!