

Between the triumph of the Palm Sunday and the humiliation of the suffering Christ, we have experienced during this week a deep contrast behind which lies a deep truth. Today, the risen Jesus triumphs, but His triumph is the triumph of love. Between the triumphal procession of Palms and the dramas of the Passion, Jesus is obedient until death and the death of the Cross...

Is there a shocking disharmony? No.

There is, rather, a deep unity: the contrast between the "crucify Him!" of the Passion, the "Hosannah!" of the Palm Sunday and the "resurrexit sicut dixit" of Easter is in fact, the mystery of the eternal plan of God. For our Master Jesus, triumph is the Cross. He does not triumph by force; and besides, when one triumphs by force, one does not triumph long. He triumphs with love by giving his life. The triumph of charity is to give one's life, especially when it is evil that one wants to overcome.

"Are you king? - Yes I am ". This is what Jesus said to Pilate despite the rags covering Him and the wounds that disfigured Him, that's what He answers.

The holy liturgy has a magnificent word for this conquering power of charity: "God reigned by the wood. It is from the cross that the Lord has made his throne. Behold, your King is coming to you. But the path He has chosen is that of the Cross and for those who want to follow Him, there is no other way to return to the Father. To die to live again, those who do not hesitate to embark on the narrow path of Calvary know the dazzling resurrection on Easter morning. The liturgy reminded us of this during the Easter vigil. Baptism has brought us from the death of sin, it has buried us with Christ to make us live a new life from death to life.

This assimilation of the mystery of Christ is the Eucharist that consumes Him. This is why the Holy Eucharist is at the centre of the three holy days of the big week.

Maundy Thursday first. The very title of the liturgical office, Mass in Cena Domini, informs us of the direction to be given to the life of our soul. The Church made us renew the Lord's Supper around Jesus. She makes us live again. The Eucharist is the sacrament of love that brings together, that welds our souls to one another and all of us to Christ.

Likewise for Good Friday, at the very hour when Jesus expired. The intention is transparent: we cannot enter into a closer participation in the Passion of Christ than having lived, the day before, communion with his sacred body. Is not the Eucharist, essentially the sacrifice of the Lord? What we must repeat here is that this sacrifice retains a triumphant aspect. Certainly, in this tragic hour that was that of the Prince of this world, sadness overwhelmed the Church, but it is above all the sadness inspired by sin, the cause of the death of the Just. Let us still think of the adoration of the Cross during the liturgical service of Good Friday, it is by the wood of the cross that came joy for the whole world. Echo of the cry of victory barely contained, pushed by Jesus on the threshold of the Passion. "It is now the judgment of the world said Jesus, it is now that the prince of this world will be thrown down and I raised from earth, I will draw all men to me" (Jn, XII 31-32).

Last Sunday, we were honoring Christ the King, but of a kingship that will be fulfilled by the Cross. Friday, we honored the Cross but the cross that allowed Christ to take possession of his Kingdom.

Past those dark hours already illuminated by the first light of the resurrection, we have seen the Church shut up in the silence of waiting.

Holy Saturday is a liturgically empty day because the mourning bride is waiting for the return of the husband. But as Mary waited on Easter morning, in the certainty of the Resurrection, so the Church is waiting. A few more hours and she began to sing as we heard during the Easter vigil: "This is the happy night when Christ, after breaking the bonds of death, has emerged, alive and victorious of the grave" . This is the song of the Exultet.

Look at the apostles. They were annihilated by the passion and death of Jesus, this ignominious death! They escaped. Some even betrayed, and not least ... They abandoned the Master they had sworn to serve until the end. Sad, disappointed, they returned to their ordinary lives. In three days, everything seems almost forgotten. If you enter the Cenacle, you will see them buried in a fearful silence, shut up for fear of the Jews.

Yet they have heard of the Resurrection. Mary Magdalene and the holy women warned them. They do not believe and seem to lose all hope.

But despite their infidelity, the Master presents himself to them. "Pax vobis," peace be with you, it is me, do not be afraid. As the Father sent me, I send you. Sins will be forgiven through your ministry. «Where, then, can we find more abundant mercy, a forgiveness as generous as in the heart of Jesus? He presents himself, He the Risen Triumphant like a friend. What do you need from a friend? A friend must know how to forgive infidelities, forget ingratitude, endure the defects and weaknesses of our poor human nature, he must believe in all the sincerity of our repentance, trust our good will and the reality of our affection. Then, on this glorious Easter day, Christ is not only the glorious Conqueror of death, he is also the friend par excellence, the friend whose kindness, wisdom, and power adapt to all the needs of our lives to make it germinate the richest hopes.

During His agony in the garden of the olive trees, Jesus had decided to enter the nights of our despair so that, from now on, we are not alone. His love went that far. During the Easter vigil, the deacon sang "O felix culpa", "O blessed fault", O blessed fault which has earned us such a great Redeemer.

From now on, for those who love God, says Saint Paul, everything converges towards their good. We are "resurrected with Christ and we must seek the realities from above, not those from the earth" (Col., III 1-follo.) So causing self to die, the old man, the man of sin, we will put on "the new man, the one who, to gain access to knowledge, is constantly renewed in the image of his Creator" (Rom., VI and Eph., IV).

In this radiant morning of Easter, where the bells, the joyful alleluia and the organ are, again, heard our hearts healed, consoled, strengthened, resuscitated even of a resurrection entirely interior at the end of this route of Lent, then sounds in us the resurrection of a new life full of fervour and victory because Jesus came to resurrect in each one of our souls too.

Amen