



The Life of Holiness in the World

(John Paul II. ChL, n. 17)

The vocation of the lay faithful to holiness implies that life according to the Spirit expresses itself in a particular way in their *involvement in temporal affairs* and in their *participation in earthly activities*. Once again, the apostle admonishes us: "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17).

Applying the apostle's words to the

lay faithful, the Council categorically affirms: "Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be excluded from their religious programme of life". Likewise, the Synod Fathers have said: "The unity of life of the lay faithful is of the greatest importance: indeed, they must be sanctified in everyday professional and social life. Therefore, to respond to their vocation, the lay faithful must see their daily activities as an occasion to join themselves to God, fulfil his will, serve other people and lead them to communion with God in Christ".

The vocation to holiness must be recognized and lived by the lay faithful, first of all as an undeniable and demanding obligation and as a shining example of the infinite love of the Father that has regenerated them in his own life of holiness. Such a vocation, then, ought to be called an *essential and inseparable element of the new life of Baptism*, and therefore an element which determines their dignity.

At the same time, the vocation to holiness is *intimately connected to mission* and to the responsibility entrusted to the lay faithful in the Church and in the world. In fact, that same holiness which is derived simply from their participation in the Church's holiness, represents their first and fundamental contribution to the building of the Church herself, who is the "Communion of Saints".

The eyes of faith behold a wonderful scene: that of a countless number of lay people, both women and men, busy at work in their daily life and activity, oftentimes far from view and quite unclaimed by the world, unknown to the world's great personages but nonetheless looked upon in love by the Father, untiring labourers who work in the Lord's vineyard. Confident and steadfast through the power of God's grace, these are the humble yet great builders of the Kingdom of God in history.

Holiness, then, must be called a fundamental presupposition and an irreplaceable condition for everyone in fulfilling the mission of salvation within the Church. The Church's holiness is the hidden source and the infallible measure of the works of the apostolate and of the missionary effort. Only in the measure that the Church, Christ's Spouse, is loved by him and she, in turn, loves him, does she become a mother fruitful in the Spirit.

Again, we take up the image from the gospel: the fruitfulness and the growth of the branches depends on their remaining united to the vine. "As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:4-5).

It is appropriate to recall here the solemn proclamation of beatification and canonization of lay men and women which took place during the month of the Synod. The entire People of God, and the lay faithful in particular, can find at this moment new models of holiness and new witnesses of heroic virtue lived in the ordinary everyday circumstances of human existence... Saint Leo the Great comes to mind: "Acknowledge, O Christian, your dignity!". And Saint Augustine: "Let us rejoice and give thanks: we have not only become Christians, but Christ himself... Stand in awe and rejoice: We have become Christ".

The dignity as a Christian, the source of equality for all members of the Church, guarantees and fosters the spirit of *communion* and fellowship, and, at the same time, becomes the hidden dynamic force in the lay faithful's apostolate and mission. It is a *dignity*, however, *which brings demands*, the dignity of labourers called by the Lord to work in his vineyard.

I Prayer for vocations

The young person in the search

Lord Jesus,
I'm a young person today.
I like comfort, I'm attracted to easy choices.
I'm a child of my time.
Today, however, among thousand voices,
I hear your distinct voice:
"Come and follow me!"
In an instant, you upset my dreams,
you turn my plans upside down.
You need me, my enthusiasm,
my generosity, my energy as a young person.
What do you want from me?
Where are you taking me, Lord?
Give me the courage to leave,
to leave my things,
my house, my land, my people.
I'm so uncertain and I am too young, Lord!
"I am young", but it goes...
I will always be with you.

Communities praying for young people who are in the search

Lord Jesus,
With your loving gaze
You keep calling so many young people
living in the difficulties of today's world:
Open their minds to recognize,
among many voices echoing around them,
the distinct, meek and powerful voice,
which still repeats to this day:
"Come and follow me!"
Move the enthusiasm
of our youth to generosity,
and make it sensitive to the expectations of the
brothers
appealing solidarity and peace, truth and love.
Direct the hearts of young people
towards the radicality of the Gospel,
capable of revealing to modern
men and women
the immense riches of your charity.
Call them with your goodness,
to draw them to you!
Take them with your sweetness,
to welcome them to You!
Send them with your truth,
to keep them with you!
Amen.

(John Paul II)

The Lord continues to call

Since the beginning of Covid-19 until now, news has come from more than a dozen young men and women who have asked for information and an initial orientation on Consecrated Secular life (CDB and VDB). It is a good news that speaks to us of the Lord who continues to call, of the young people who are searching and of us, on the one hand, to live this time with a renewed awareness, and on the other hand, to be attentive to what is going on within the young people, because God is going to meet them. Let us give thanks to God.

Solidarity in times of Covid-19

The initiatives to go out to meet the needs of the people in the neighborhoods where we live are multiplying. The same can be said of the solidarity among the sisters of the Institute. "Look how they love each other" was said of the first Christian communities. The same can also be said of us all.

150 anniversary of the past pupils of Don Bosco

On June 24th, the Association of Past Pupils of Don Bosco recalled with emotion the gesture of that first group of past pupils who, with Carlo Gastini, went to celebrate Don Bosco, on the occasion of his feast. 150 years later, the Past Pupils of Don Bosco made the same gesture: sending to the Rector Major a cup of coffee to be made, sharing the flavour of a good café with a fair trade project, organized between a company from Slovakia and a company from Thailand - both are run by Past Pupils of Don Bosco - with the aim of helping different development projects animated by them. The box with the cups and the coffee are for sale. Ask information from network@exallievi.org

EESS and online formation sessions

You knew the mode of EESS made from reflections, recorded on CDs, designed for the sick. Now it's different. It is guaranteed to be present at a distance, online, for EESS courses as well as for formation sessions and meetings of local, regional and central councils. In these months there are several courses planned. It is a true openness to the values of the world to realize the secular mission.

The FMA General Chapter postponed to April 2021

Worldwide pandemic circumstances motivated the change in the General Chapter of FMA. Mother Ivonne announced the new date: after Easter. The Salesian Family accompanies them in prayer, asking the Lord for the grace of discernment for creative fidelity to the mission entrusted to them in the growth of the Kingdom in the hearts of the young.