



WAY OF THE CROSS

Kiwamirembe Shrine
Communion and Liberation

Friday, 30th March 2018

FAMILIARITY WITH CHRIST

by Luigi Giussani

"There will be no faithfulness [...] if in man's heart is not found a question for which only God offers the answer or, rather, for which only God is the answer" (John Paul II).

[...] This morning, what makes me tremble is the surprise that I am capable of distancing myself far away from myself [...]

In other words, how urgent it is that the humanity with which we met each other all those years ago [...] find itself together again, and help us not to forget who we are! And so as not to forget who we are, the answer must be present.

"If man is to believe in himself he must believe in God - said Karol Wojtyla on another occasion - since man is made in the image and likeness of God. When man is deprived of God, he is not given back to himself but is deprived of his own self!" [...]

I reminded [...] several times [...] this poem by Par Lagerkvist, the author of the book *Barabbas*, which I like so much, because it sums up, as it were, the human attitude we embraced in the first ten years of our history:

"My friend is a stranger, someone I do not know! A stranger far, far away / For his sake my heart is full of disquiet / Because he is not with me... / Who are you who so fill my heart with your absence? / Who fill the entire world with your absence?". I was reflecting this morning: "Who can say if this question is true – is true –? If it was possible for an atheist, who was searching, to come up with such an expression, what about me? After their meeting, when God was going away, Moses asked Him, "Let me see your face". The same question should echo in me, too [...]

You have grown up, and while you have secured a human ability in your professions, there is the possibility of drifting away from Christ (in contrast with the emotion of all those years ago and, above all, certain

circumstances of all those years ago). There is a kind of drifting away from Christ, except in particular moments. What I mean is that there is a drifting away from Christ except when we set ourselves to pray, a drifting away from Christ when, for example, you do something in His name, or in the name of the Church, or in the name of the Movement. It is as if Christ were far from our heart [...]

This distancing of Christ from the heart, apart from certain moments in which His presence seems to be at work, generates another distancing, which reveals itself in an ultimate embarrassment amongst us – I am speaking of husbands and wives, too – in an ultimate mutual embarrassment. The absence of knowledge of Christ (knowledge in the Biblical sense-knowledge as familiarity, as concord, as assimilation, as presence in the heart), the distancing of Christ from the heart distances the ultimate aspect of my heart from the ultimate aspect of your heart, except in everyday actions (keeping house, looking after the children, etc.) [...]

There is an embarrassment that is His being distant, like a non-presence, a not being decisive for the heart. In actions no, in these it can be decisive (we go to Church, we build the Movement, we pray, we do School of Community, we do charitable works, we organize groups here and there, we throw ourselves into politics). In activities, it's not lacking; it can be decisive for so many activities, but what about the heart? In the heart, no! Because the heart is how you look at your children, how you look at your wife or your husband, how you look at someone passing you on the street, how you look at the people in the community or your colleagues at work, and, above all, how you get up in the morning. This distancing explains another distancing, which reveals itself in an ultimate

embarrassment in our relationships, in the way we look at each other, because it is only our brother Christ who can make us really brothers-brothers!

If we think that the value, the consistency and the value of our life lie in the responsibility for this nearness of Christ and therefore for this nearness amongst men, for this nearness amongst us, then we have to understand that the friendship and the companionship we mean to live are a means for not suspending or leaving suspended our initiative in this sense. My relationship with God is what can support life as a work that build the world, as

something true. But the first fruit that this relationship can give is that of creating a companionship, a companionship between those who mean to live that work and realize it. Our companionship means not to let time pass without our life asking, seeking, wanting the relationship with God present and without our life wanting or accepting that companionship, without which not even the image of His presence would be true. [...]

Christ is the motive for which we live a form of life that we would never have lived; and yet He is far from our heart!

POVERA VOCE

Povera voce di un uomo che non c'è
La nostra voce, se non ha più un perché:
Deve gridare, deve implorare
Che il respiro della vita non abbia fine

Poi deve cantare perché la vita c'è
Tutta la vita chiede l'eternità;
Non può morire, non può finire
La nostra voce che la vita chiede all'Amor

Non è povera voce di un uomo che non c'è,
La nostra voce canta con un perché.

THE FUNDAMENTAL THEME OF HOLY WEEK

by Luigi Giussani

Holy week has one fundamental and unavoidable theme: we are sinners and Christ's death saves us. Christ's death transforms into good any of our pasts, but our past is full of shadow, which we call sin.

It is Christ's death that saves us. "That saves us," means that the "now" (the now that is happening, the now that is about to happen in an instant and that afterward becomes present), is totally changed by the embrace and acceptance that we make of Christ on the cross.

One cannot recognize Christ on the cross without immediately understanding and sensing that that cross must touch us, that we can no longer object to sacrifice: from the time that the Lord died there are no longer any objections to sacrifice.

At the beginning of Holy Week, the liturgy offers a beautiful prayer that begins like this: "Look, Omnipotent God, on humanity, broken because of its mortal weakness".

Broken because of its mortal weakness: if we are not aware of this we are like babes in front of a great proposal, an adult proposal.

The smallest expression of this mortal weakness is the total distraction in which we normally live, so much so that all the reminders we receive are not able to chip it away. Our distraction is, at best, like cold steel. But on this "at best", our mortal weakness can have built mistakes, betrayals, wickedness, injustices, lies. Yet, no matter how big the pile of lies and wickedness is, it belongs to the category of which the liturgy reminds us: our mortal weakness.

It is precisely here where God, becoming man, arrives; it is precisely here, in the realm of the brokenness of our humanity due to our mortal weakness.

We must feel this brokenness in order to become aware of the great jolt of God who becomes man and who comes among us.

"Omnipotent God, look upon our humanity broken, because of its mortal weakness and make it live again by the passion of your only Son".

It is a jolt of life with which He shakes up our humanity broken and our mortal weakness. Make it live again through the sacrifice, the sorrow and His death.

REFLECTION

THE PROCESSION WILL NOW BEGIN: PLEASE FOLLOW IN SILENCE THE INDICATIONS OF THE USHERS.

FIRST STATION

STABAT MATER

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the Last

Through her heart His sorrow sharing
All his bitter anguish bearing
Now at length the sword has passed

O, how sad and sore distressed
Was that mother, highly blessed
Of the sole begotten One

Christ above in torment hangs
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son

Gospel
Luke 22: 47-62

SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS HERE AND NOW

by Luigi Giussani

You look at me from the Cross! You look at me from the cross: You are looking at me now! If it were not "now", we would be talking about nothing. The event that happens again, here and now, is above all a fact, a fact that cannot be reduced to nothing, a fact that cannot be censured, a fact that cannot be erased.

It is a fact for you, it is a fact that supremely interests you. It is a fact for you! "For you" is the voice that springs out from the heart of the crucified. "For me" is what springs out from my pained heart, from my conscience. What does this gaze tell me? What are You telling

me, You who look at me? You... Redeemer, You Liberator, You Restorer, You who reawakens me from death. Everything would fall in death without this voice, without this Presence.

It is through our gaze fixed on the Cross that we learn; it is through fixing our gaze on the Cross that we learn to experience His pervasive Presence, that we learn the unavoidable need of His grace for the satisfaction and joy of our life.

REFLECTION

LABAL BIN KI WORO

Labal bin ki woro, i wi kalvario
ada ting wangi malo nen Yesu otyeko to

Atimo rac mu kato aneko Yesu Rwot
Ki bal ma mera acobo adunune maleng

Labal nen Lalar, nen remone maleng
Otac orido wiye okuto cobe rac

Pi pwod ma gipwode kom Yesu tye karem,
Icinge wa ityene gimedo arem manyen

THE PROCESSION WILL NOW CONTINUE IN SILENCE: PLEASE FOLLOW THE INDICATION OF THE USHERS.

SECOND STATION

STABAT MATER

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the Last

Is there one who would not weep
Whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear mother to behold?

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain
In that mother's pain untold?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled
She beheld her tender child
All with bloody scourges rent

Gospel

Luke 22: 66, Luke 23: 1-25

THE SACRIFICE

by Luigi Giussani

The word "sacrifice" began, historically, to become a great word from the time that God became a man; and then, after, He began to speak to the people; and the people seemed to follow Him when He performed strange gestures (or miracles), but the day after they forgot –He was there alone– and therefore the number of those against Him grew, until they took Him and killed Him.

From the time that man was killed, nailed to a cross, and shouted, "Father, why have you abandoned me?" (Which is the most human cry of desperation ever heard in the air) and then said, "Forgive them because they do not know what they are doing," and last He shouted, "Into your hands I commend my spirit" –from that moment, from when that man was stretched out on the cross and nailed, from that moment, the word sacrifice became the center, not of that man's life, it became the center of the life of every man, and the destiny of every man depends on that death.

From when that man died on the cross, the word sacrifice became a huge word, great, and it revealed –like when the sun rises, like a sun that rises– that the whole life of every man

is woven with sacrifices, is full of shudders of sacrifice, is as it were dominated by the need to sacrifice: a mother in order to generate a child; a father in order to take care of the mother and the child; to truly be the friend of another person; to continue the path with someone you love; to go to work and earn your weekly paycheck. It's impossible to avoid sacrifice, and over everything looms the greatest sacrifice you can conceive of, which is death.

Sacrifice was inconceivable, yet there is a point in history when sacrifice started to become interesting – or had to do with man's interests; that is, man's destiny. This was when Christ died on the cross, so that men could be saved from death; that is, so that things could be saved from corruption, from becoming worms, small, numerous. From that moment the word sacrifice became interesting; man understood that no part of his life could avoid sacrifice.

Dying, Jesus not only made us understand that sacrifice was interesting, interesting for the destiny of man –He died so that men could reach their destiny and save themselves from death, through death– but He also

revealed, made us see that it was not something strange, that it was something interesting but not strange, because all of life is like that. If you look at all of your life, all of your life is made up of sacrifices, from when you have to get up in the morning.

The cross of Christ revealed, on one hand, the dominion sacrifice has on the life of all men,

and on the other hand, that its meaning was not necessarily negative but rather, that it had a mysteriously positive significance: it was the condition for men to reach their destiny. "Through Your cross You have redeemed the world," through Your cross, o Christ, You have saved the world.

WHY DID HE COME?

by Charles Péguy

Why did He come? Why did He come into the world? One must believe that I have a certain importance, I who am nothing... How is it possible that I am not great if I've messed up so many things, disordered so many things,

and such a great world? In order to have started such a tragic history. A God, God went out of His way, God sacrificed Himself for me. This is Christianity.

REFLECTION

QUI, PRESSO A TE

Qui, presso a te, Signor,
restar vogl'io;
e il grido del mio cuor,
l'ascolta o Dio!

La sera scende oscura
Sul cuor che s'impaura,
mi tenga ogn'or la fe'
qui presso a te.

Qui, presso a te, Signor,
restar vogl'io;
niun vede il mio dolor,
tu 'l vedi o Dio!

O vivo pan verace,
sol tu puoi darmi pace,
e pace v'ha per me,
qui presso a te.

HERE, NEXT TO YOU

Here, next to you, Lord,
I wish to stay;
And the cry of my heart,
Listen to it, O God!

The dark night descends
on the heart that is in fear,
but my faith remains every
hour, Here next to you.

Here, next to you, Lord,
I wish to stay;
No one sees my pain,
You see it, O God!

O, living, true bread,
only you can give me peace,
and there is peace for me,
Here next to you.

THIRD STATION

STABAT MATER

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the Last

Oh thou mother! Font of Love!
Touch my spirit from above
Make my heart with thee accord

Make me feel as thou hast felt
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord

Virgin of all virgin blest
Listen to my tard request
Let me share thy grief divine

Gospel
Luke 23: 26-46

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHARITY OF JOAN OF ARC by Charles Péguy

Cry still ringing in all humanity;
Cry that made the Church militant totter;
In which the suffering Church too recognized its own fear;
Through which the Church triumphant experienced its triumph;

Cry ringing at the heart of all humanity;
Cry ringing at the heart of all Christendom;
O culminating cry, everlastingly valid.

Cry as if God himself had sinned like us;
As if God himself had despaired;
O culminating cry, everlastingly valid.
As if even God had sinned like us.
Committing the greatest sin.
Which is to despair.
The sin of despair.

Louder than the two thieves hanging beside him;
And who howled at death like famished dogs.

The thieves howled but a human howl;
The thieves howled but a cry of human death.
Also they slavered but human slaver:

The Just One alone uttered the everlasting cry.

But why? What was the matter with him?

The thieves uttered but a human cry;

For they knew but human distress;
They had experienced but human distress.

He alone could utter the superhuman cry;
He alone then knew that superhuman distress.

That is why the thieves uttered only a cry that was quenched in the night.

And he uttered the cry that will sound forever, eternally forever, the cry that will eternally never be quenched.
In any night. In any night of time and eternity.

For the thief on the left and the thief on the right
Felt only the nails in the hollow of their hands.

What mattered to him the thrust of the Roman spear;
What mattered to him the strain of nails and the hammer;
The piercing of nail, the piercing of the spear;
What mattered to him the nails in the hollow of the hand;
The piercing of nails in the hollow of both his hands;

His aching throat.
Smarting.
Burning.

Tearing apart.
His parched throat all athirst.
His parched gorge.
His gorge athirst.
His left hand that burned.
And his right hand.
His left foot that burned.
And his right foot.
Because his left hand was pierced.
And his right hand.
And his left foot was pierced.

And his right foot.
All of his four limbs.
His poor four limbs.
And his side that burned.
His pierced side.
His pierced heart.
And his heart that burned.

His heart consumed with love.
His heart devoured with love.

Peter's denial and the Roman spear;
The spitting, the insults, the crown of thorns;
The scourging reed, the scepter made of a reed;

The shouts of the people and the Roman tormentors.
The blow on his face.
For it was the first time he had been struck in the face.

He had not cried out under the Roman spear;
He had not cried out under the kiss of perjury;
He had not cried out under the storm of abuse;
He had not cried out under the Roman tormentors.

He had not cried out under the bitterness of ingratitude.
The bitter taste in his throat.
In his gorge.
His throat made dry and bitter by bitterness.
Dry from choking down bitterness.
Dry, bitter from choking down ingratitude.
Men's ingratitude.

Bitter, suffocating from choking down.
Suffocated by floods of ingratitude.
Strangled by choking down.
And he would no longer speak in similes.

He had not cried out in the face of perjury;
He had not cried out in the face of abuse;
He had not cried out in the face of the Roman tormentors.
So why did he cry out; before what did he cry out.

Tristis, tristis usque ad mortem;
Sorrowful unto death; but unto what death;
Unto dying;
Or unto that moment of death.

REFLECTION

TWANDIBADDE TUTYA

Twandibadde tutya singa Kristu teyaja
Twandibadde wa ffe, a Kristu yebazibwe

Twandifudde ubi twandibuze fenna,
Kristu yeebazibwe

Twandifudde ubi ffe nno aboononyi
Kristu yatulonda

Twandifudde ubi mukizikiza eky'ekibi,
Yatuwa ekitangaala

FOURTH STATION

STABAT MATER

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the Last

Let me, to my latest breath,
In the body, bear the death
Of that dying Son of thine

Holy mother! Pierce me though,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified

While my body here decays
May my soul thy goodness praise
Safe in paradise with thee. Amen

Gospel
Luke 23: 47-56

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHARITY OF JOAN OF ARC

by Charles Péguy

He is here.
He is here as on the first day.

He is here among us as on the day of his death.
He is here forever among us just as much as on the first day.
For every day.

He is here among us all the days of his eternity.
His body, that same body of his, hangs on the same cross;
His eyes, those same eyes of his, quiver with the same tears;
His blood, the same blood of his, bleeds from the same wounds;

His heart, that same heart of his, bleeds with the same love.
The same sacrifice causes the same blood to flow.

A parish shone with an everlasting brightness, but all the parishes shine eternally, for in all the parishes there is the body of Jesus Christ.

The same sacrifice crucifies the same body, the same sacrifice causes the same blood to flow.
The same sacrifice offers up the same flesh, the same sacrifice sheds the same blood.
The same sacrifice sacrifices the same flesh and the same blood.

It is the same story, exactly the same, eternally the same, which happened in that time and in that country and which happens on all days in all days of all eternity.
In all the parishes of all Christendom.

REFLECTION AND BLESSING

TI ADORO

Ti adoro, Redentore
di spine incoronato,
per ogni peccatore
a morte condannato.

Ti adoro, Gesu' buono,
schernito, schiaffeggiato;
tu doni il tuo perdono
a chi ti ha flagellato.

Ti adoro, Gesu' pio,
in croce immolato;
ripenso nel cuor mio
che tu mi hai tanto amato!
Amen

I ADORE YOU, MY REEDEMER
I adore you, my Redeemer,
Crowned with thorns,
For every sinner
Condemned to death.

I adore you, my good Jesus,
Laughed at, slapped;
You give your forgiveness
To those who scourged you.

I adore you, my Pious Jesus,
Given up on the cross;
I ponder in my heart
How much you loved me!
Amen