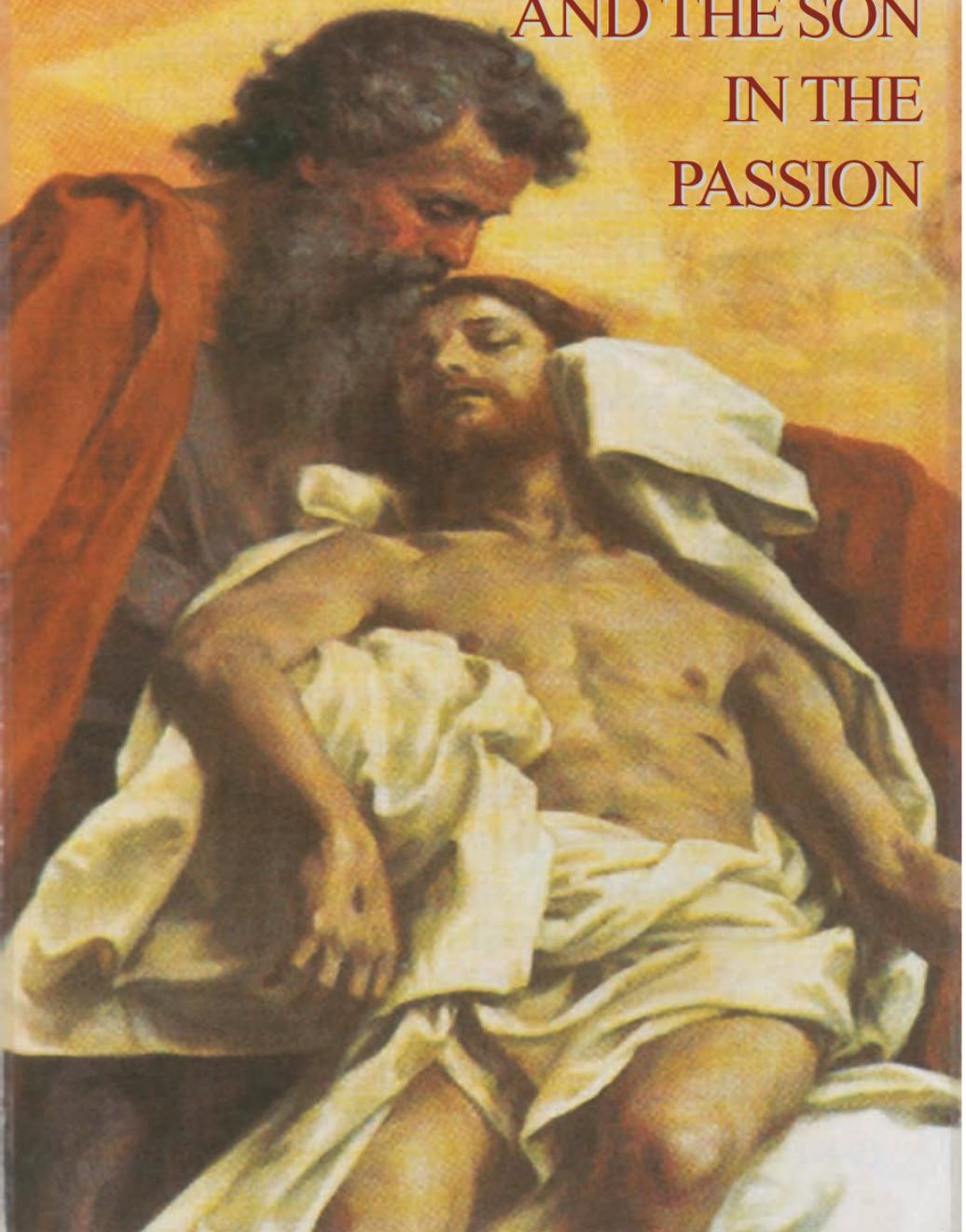


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THE FATHER
AND THE SON
IN THE
PASSION



**THE FATHER AND THE SON
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J. Galot

THE FATHER AND THE SON IN THE PASSION

One day a little boy, hearing in catechism class that the Father sent His Son to die on the cross in order to save man, came out with this expression: "*Convenient, huh!*".

It sounds like a joke, but it is very sad.

For a child, the fatherly image is, and must be, that of taking care of and saving him, and not of sending him to die; naturally he develops a sense of distrust toward this God the Father who sacrifices his Son, instead of going to die for his Son himself, as is logical and natural from a human point of view.

Let us imagine that this child, as an adult, has the misfortune of coming across the sermon which Bossuet, the greatest sacred orator of the XVII century, gave at the court of the king of France on Holy Friday of 1662:

"The holy soul of my Saviour is horrified by a threatening God and while it feels like throwing itself into the arms of this God to seek comfort and relief, it sees him with a cross look on his face, re-

jecting him and abandoning him, leaving him completely prey to the fury of his justice. Oh Jesus, you throw yourself into the Father's arms and you feel yourself rejected, you feel that he is persecuting you, striking you and abandoning you, it is him who is crushing you under the enormous and unbearable weight of his revenge... The wrath of an angry God: Jesus prays and the enraged Father doesn't listen to him, it is the justice of a God who avenges the offences he has received; Jesus suffers and the Father doesn't care, he isn't appeased, he wants him to die!"

What sentiments will develop in the spirit of a child who has grown up with these teachings? At best, he will have a "holy" terror of God, which is very unlikely to turn into Love.

That child is in each one of us and we have always considered God the Father as an inflexible judge, which doesn't agree with the Gospel, but who has always been portrayed as such by preachers, and Bossuet is the model imitated by all.

The intent of preachers is to prove that sin is so serious that it forces the Father to treat his Son cruelly and without mercy, unto his death. However, even though they had good intentions, they instilled in the

faithful a conviction that the "Father" acts like a vengeful and merciless "master".

Even the Liturgy has its responsibility. Just think of the prayer that introduces the recitation of the Our Father during Mass: "Praeceptis salutaribus moniti et divina institutione formati, audemus dicere: Pater.. " which, freely translated, goes like this: "Lord God, we have the courage to call you Father only because your son Jesus commanded us to!" .

Poor Father!

Where is the Spirit of the Son that has been given to us so that we may cry out "Abbà" (Gal. 4,6), that is, Daddy? It is buried under this false vision based on the juridical concept of expiation which – Fr. Cantalamessa writes - "in the long run, could only bring about a secret rejection of this "implacable" Father who impassively waits from heaven for the blood of the redemption to be shed for him, and from his own Son" (from LIFE IN THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST, Ed. Ancora).

But are we sure that the Father sent his Son to die, with a coldness that is just short of cynicism, detaching him completely from his own Person? We are totally convinced of the opposite, and that is, the Father

especially, in his Son, has carried the weight of the Passion, just as the little boy deemed it right: the spirit of children isn't deceived and doesn't deceive. We will try to demonstrate this affirmation by comparing the Gospels which speak about Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane:

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me.” He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will!”. When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, “My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!” (Mt 26:36-42)

“And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he

prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground". (Lk 22:43-46)

"Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand". (Mt 26:45-46)

"So Judas got a band of soldiers and guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees and went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and said to them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered him, "Jesus the Nazorean." He said to them, "I AM." Judas his betrayer was also with them. When he said to them, "I AM," they turned away and fell to the ground". (Jn 18:4-6)

Let us examine this description of Jesus' agony in Gethsemane because it is fundamentally important in order to understand the Father's Heart and to guide us on the way to holiness: Gethsemane is a path we must travel on our road to heaven, that is, toward the Father.

"Gethsemane"

What is Gethsemane? It's the great agon, the great battle that Jesus has to undergo as the "son of man" in order to ransom all men. Jesus the man, with his most perfect and therefore infinitely sensitive humanity, must strike the great adversary called "death", "evil", "sin". It is the "hour of darkness."

Jesus has lost the power of doing miracles, that supernatural energy with which he dominated all the realities around him, made demons flee, calmed the stormy seas and raised the dead. With this power he faced evil and destroyed it: "he healed them all" says the Gospel.

Now all the evil in the world is poured into his humanity and he asks his close friends for help because his "soul is sorrowful unto death" and he begins to feel "sorrow and distress". But his friends are sleeping, the "adversary" has chloroformed their will because they didn't pray and therefore their "flesh is weak."

Jesus remains alone with his Father and begins the most heartfelt prayer man has ever raised to God: "Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me.... " .

In this existential clash between the "self " of Jesus the man and "God", the final victory belongs to God, because Jesus subordinates his will to the Fa-

ther's: "... yet, not as I will, but as you will! " (Mt 26,39). It is the great victory, the ransom of Adam's "no", which Jesus the man obtains in his sweating of blood.

"His sweat became as drops of blood falling on the ground"

The sweating of blood (hematitrosis) it is a phenomenon that occurs in very rare cases: it is *"an extravasation of blood through the capillaries that supply the sweat-glands, due to an abnormal constriction of the vasomotor nerves, following an extraordinary psychic trauma"*. It is what mystical writers call the "oil-press", perhaps in reference to the word Gethsemane, which precisely means "olive-press": this was a rural estate where an oil-press had been dug out in the rock to press the fruits of the olive tress planted in the enclosure.

Jesus' perspiration - unlike the other cases verified by clinicians – was very extraordinary, so abundant that it *"soaked into the ground"*: this shows the immense, supreme emotion our Saviour suffered.

According to a thesis put forth by two Italians doctors who have studied the phenomenon in detail, Jesus had a heart attack at Gethsemane.

When he realizes he is fainting, Jesus clings to the Father, seeking in Him the comfort that his sleeping brothers aren't able to give him. And the Father immediately responds to his Son's call by sending him an Angel.

The Angel of the Chalice

It is the Angel of consolation, the Angel of the chalice. What is in that chalice? There is the Power of Life of the Father who communicates Himself to his Son, just as the Son, a few hours before, had communicated Himself to the apostles. This new Power allows Him to get up again, reproach His friends with gentleness and irony and go toward the one who sold him with words that are a cry of Love:

“So, you could not keep watch with Me for one hour? ...Are you still sleeping and resting?” (Mk 14:41).

“Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Lk 22:48).

“I AM HE!”: The Father is in Jesus.

Jesus becomes the usual Master again, in fact He is more powerful than before, because now the Almighty Father is totally in Him. In order to convince

ourselves, let us now see what happens in the encounter with the crowd and the guards who went to arrest Him:

“Whom do you seek?” They answered Him: *“Jesus the Nazarene”*. He said to them: *“I AM HE!”* (Jn 18:6)

In the Italian version of the text we read: *“Sono io!”* (It is I), but this is because in current speech the expression sounds better phonetically. In the Latin version, instead, it is *“Ego sum”* and in Greek *“ἐγώ εἰμι”*. The literal translation is therefore: *“I am!”*.

“I AM” is the Father’s name, who calls Himself in this way in the Old Testament:

Moses said to God: ‘Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, *“The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”* And God said to Moses: *“I am who I am!”* Then He said: *“you shall say to the children of Israel: I AM has sent me to you”* (Ex 3:13-14).

Therefore, in saying *“I am he!”*, Jesus describes Himself with the Father’s name. Or rather, the Father declares His presence in the Son and bears witness to Himself – not only with His own name – with His POWER also, which is the characteristic of God the Father: *“When He said to them “I AM HE”, they drew back and fell to the ground”* (Jn 18:6).

The Father, through Jesus, bears the weight of the Passion

We saw Jesus collapse to the ground, seized with “sorrow and anguish” (Mt 26:37) and “fear” (Lk 14:33). He was under so much stress that He sweat blood. He probably had a heart attack.

How could a man in those conditions immediately regain control of the situation and have so much strength as to make “*a large crowd with swords and clubs*” fall to the ground (Mt 26:47) while a few minutes before He had collapsed to the ground?

How could He have resisted the scourging, the journey to Calvary and the crucifixion?

How could He have lived the whole Passion, always in control of men and events, like in the case of Veronica, the pious women and the good thief?

It is the Father who, through the Son, bears the weight of the Passion and masters it step by step, until Jesus cries out victoriously: “It is finished!” (Jn 19:30).

As soon as the Son utters these words, the Father slowly withdraws from His tortured body which only He kept alive until that moment.

Jesus perceives that the Father is drawing away, and for a moment feels the dismay which He experienced in Gethsemane:

“About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: “Eli, Eli, lamà sabactani”, that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” ... and Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit” (Mt 27:46-50).

Jesus fought His battle and won it, but not alone: in Him the Father fought and won, with the Power of His Spirit. Now Jesus' body, the instrument of victory, is hanging on the cross. It will remain lifeless for a few hours, the time needed to convince men that he is truly dead; then – when men will have resigned themselves of their defeat – the Father will send forth his Power of Life and victory with the Resurrection.

"Resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluja!"

Therefore the prophecy came true and his spiritualized body first appeared untouchable and then palpable to prove to the incredulous Thomas that it was really Him, the Master, who preserved the radiance of the "signs" provoked by sin but made radiant by Love which is more powerful than sin.

Light and darkness met on the body of the Son of man. The Light conquered because Love conquered and filled that body with all the powers of a spiritualized body. Basically, the risen Jesus has a body with

real flesh, just like he did before dying, but has no limits of space, time or place; that is, he has obtained powers that go well beyond matter and which are typical of the purest spirits. His body now has impassibility, agility, spirituality and clarity.

These characteristics allow the body to participate in the joys of eternal beatitude, which for the soul consist in the vision of God. Among the bodily joys there are those of the five senses, of the imagination, of emotions and of the contemplation of created beauties. All of this can be found in the Gospel:

- the body of the risen Jesus can overcome any material barrier: *"When the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came..."* (Jn 20: 19);

- it can carry out any function, as when he was on earth, even though he doesn't need to: *"They gave him a piece of baked fish: he took it and ate it in front of them"* (Lk. 24:41-43);

- his physical appearance and the tone of his voice are the same, but Jesus is free to manifest such realities in whatever way and whenever he wants: *"Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him"* (Lk 24:15-

16); *"Jesus said to her: Mary! She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!"* (Jn 20:16); *"But he vanished from their sight"* (Lk 28:31);

- from this body flows Peace and Fire, which is perceived in the spirit even though the mind hasn't noticed the presence of Jesus yet: *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us along the way and opened the Scriptures to us?"* (Lk 24,33);

- it is no longer subjected to the laws of gravity: *"As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven"* (Lk 24,51).

Our body will also be glorified

This will happen to our body at the resurrection of the dead if, during our life, it conforms with the Will of God: *"God created man in His image"* (Gen 1,27), and *"in His image"* he will raise him from the dead after redeeming his sin. Scripture gives us confirmation of this:

"Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father!" (Mt. 13,43)

"But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He

will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body" (Phil 3,20.21)

"For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven" (2Cor 5:1)

Every Communion already contains the Resurrection. The miracle of the resurrection of Jesus' body continues in us. Every time we receive Communion we enter into communion with the body of the Risen Jesus, and therefore we absorb the vital power of the Resurrection: "O Sacred banquet, in which Christ is consumed, the soul is filled with grace and a pledge of future glory is given us" (from the Liturgy).

Communion is not only a source of life for our soul, but also for our body. Let us recall what Blessed Moscati, the head physician of the University of Naples, often wrote in his prescriptions: "Eucharist Cure!"

The Father wants us "risen" as of now

We are still under the yoke of suffering but, if we comply with the Will of God as Jesus did, this yoke will become light and joyful because the Father will bear its weight through us.

However, we must believe in his Love and abandon ourselves to Him even when it seems that he is far away from us.

The Father is never far away from his children; to believe that he leaves us alone in suffering or that everything is a cruel punishment is the great snare which "the adversary" wants us to fall into; this adversary who, after leading us into sin, doesn't want us to go back into the arms of our Daddy who would immediately regenerate us in his Love which is "more powerful than sin, more powerful than evil, more powerful than death" (Dives in Misericordia).

This is Easter. This is the time of resurrection.

What we wish for everyone is that the child within us may be convinced that God is truly his Daddy. A Daddy we can trust because he will never leave us alone in suffering, but he will live it and suffer it through us in order to transform it into resurrection.

**THE RESURRECTION IS IN US EACH TIME
WE SAY "THANK YOU FATHER!"**

One of the first things that children are taught is to say "thank you" when they are given something.

Saying "thank you" lies at the foundation of human life, it is the simplest and most effective way to increase Love and keep it alive.

If we do a favour to a friend, and we receive neither a phone call nor a thank-you card, we feel that something inside us has drawn us away from that person and our natural reaction is to complain: "He didn't even say thank you!". The next time we won't help him, or else we will do it without enthusiasm because we feel betrayed in our Love.

Man is made in the image and likeness of God, and what we feel in our heart is the echo that vibrates

infinitely greater in the Father's Heart. In our relationship with Him we must use the same "manners" we use with our neighbour and Jesus teaches us this in the Gospel:

"As he continued his journey to Jerusalem, he travelled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met him. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voice, saying: "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!" And when he saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." As they were going they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply: "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him: "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you". (Lk 17:11-19)

Because of the Samaritan's "thanks", the Heart of Jesus gives him a new "grace": the healing and therefore the resurrection of his spirit, after he had already received the healing of his body.

If we learn to say "one thank you after another" for the endless gifts we receive, we will receive "one

Grace after another” and we will live in the joy of an endless resurrection.

Do we ever say: *"Father, thank you for the endless gifts you give me?"*

Someone could object: *"But where are these gifts? Life is an endless suffering..."*

We are truly cheap in spirit, because, if we had to count all the gifts the Father gives us, we should live in endless thanksgiving.

Who of us, for example, thanks God because he sees with his own eyes? Because he walks with his own legs? Because he can sleep and eat without any problem? Because he has a home, because he doesn't have a tumour, because he doesn't have a drug-addicted son? Because he isn't evicted, because he isn't economically unsuccessful? Who thanks God for the gift of the sun, the rain, the snow, the wind or a radiant dawn? Who thanks him for a child's smile or a bird's song?

Almost nobody. We are spoiled children who only see what we don't have. It seems that we deserve everything. We remember God only when we need Him and we say: "He can help me because he is almighty, and therefore he has to help me. If he is my Father he must give me whatever I ask of him". If he doesn't answer my prayers, I will cut off my relations with Him, I won't say hi to him anymore, I will be offended and turn my back on Him.

Thus this absurd and widespread attitude of faith emerges; a rudimentary and childish faith that - if it doesn't correspond to our way of thinking - turns into blasphemous feelings that make us say to God: "You are not behaving like a Father, and I don't want You."

So many people don't pray anymore and don't go to church anymore because they don't receive what they want from God!

And how many of these people, feeling themselves "betrayed" by God, go to fortune-tellers (there are a lot of them around, and they are always proliferating...) in order to reach the object they had set themselves!

The most bitter spiritual experience I have had was the conversation I had with a priest who - in a moment of serious family problems - continued to ask God for a miraculous intervention that would prevent impending financial ruin.

I tried to tell him that the good God cares first of all about our soul, and that, if we accept the trials he gives us, often everything works out. His reaction was the harshest I could imagine from a priest: *"No! I believe in the omnipotence of God! He can and must intervene; otherwise - since he is stronger - I will put up with Him but I won't accept Him!"* What a disaster!

We must be converted: our faith must lead us to give and not to ask. If we truly believe in God, we

must not only believe in His omnipotence ("I believe in God the Almighty Father"), but also in His pater-nity. And therefore we must believe in His Love, even if we aren't able to understand all the "why's" of life. We must be like Mary, who believed in the Father's Love and, when she didn't "understand", she nevertheless accepted the reality of the facts with obedience, "*pondering them in her heart*" (Lk 3: 50-51).

We must live the prayer Jesus taught us, and we must embody it as the spiritual giant, Charles de Foucauld, did:

*“Father, I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love You, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into Your hands,
without reserve, and with boundless confidence,
for You are my Father”.*

This must be our prayer, which can be summarized in a single word: "Thank you, Father!"

A man from the land of Uz, called Job, understood this well:

"a sound and honest man who feared God and shunned evil. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. And he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-donkeys, and many servants besides. This man was the most prosperous of all the Sons of the East". (Job 1:1-4)

But one day...

...All of his livestock is stolen; the faithful servants and guardians have been put to the sword.

There is economic ruin. But "Job uttered no sinful word":

"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

... Job is struck with "malignant ulcers, from the sole of his foot to the top of his head. He took a piece of pot to scrape himself, and went and sat among the ashes."

His wife insults him for his submission and faithfulness to God, whom he continues to bless after all that he has sent him. "That is how a fool of a woman

talks! " - Job answers her - "if we take happiness from God's hand, must we not take sorrow too?". Job "uttered no sinful word":

"The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord! "

... To top it all, Job's dearest friends accuse him of foolishness, sin and pride.

This is the bottom of his abyss of pain:

"And now I am the laughing stock of people who are younger than I am and whose parents I would have disdained to put with the dogs guarding my flock.

... And these are the ones who now make up songs about me and use me as a byword! Filled with disgust, they keep their distance, on seeing me, they spit without restraint". (Job 30:1 foll.)

Job is struck in his material goods, in his children, in his body and in his honour: in him all kinds of "misfortune" are summarized.

These are the trials of life we must go through sooner or later: we must consider them our true wealth, the only one which gives us the possibility to grow in faith and in the Love of God. They free us

from earthly bonds, if we accept them with the conviction that they are precious gifts.

If we always thank the Father for these "gifts", from His Heart will flow a great breath of Love which will make our souls grow and fill them with joy and peace.

It is right to ask for what seems fair to us, but we must always be ready to say "thank you" even if the Father won't grant us what we desire, in the certainty that he will always give us an infinitely more precious "grace": a deeper relationship of intimacy with Him.

This is the only purpose of our life: to know, love and serve God here on earth in order to enjoy him in eternity. It is here on earth that we gain heaven; it is here on earth that we must show God that we really love Him above all things. But how do we show Him our love if we say "thank you" only when things go well? Or, worse, if we never say it to Him?

In biblical language, our relationship with God is defined as "nuptial". When two young people are joined in marriage they say to each other: "I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad". In reality "bad times" are never bad because they are necessary to strengthen affective bonds: love that consists only in mawkish behaviour sooner or later wears out.

A father and mother are truly united when they are at the bedside of their seriously ill child, because then Love becomes strong and grows in suffering.

But we don't want to understand this. We continue to live in an earthly dimension in which only material well-being is important: having money, respect, a house, cars, people who revere us... But these things don't raise our soul, on the contrary they bury it.

Our only goal must be to enter more and more into the Heart of the Father and, to do this, we must learn to say: "Thank you, Father!". But in order to say it we must convince ourselves that the Father loves us, that he really loves us. He didn't create us to make us suffer and he doesn't delight in the suffering which he didn't invent, but which is the result of our disobedience.

In His Son, he taught us what we must do to free ourselves from this evil which we have brought about: we must "swallow it" by accepting it and offering it to the Father with a total "yes". And the Father will give us peace. If we also grow in Love and actually say "Thank you, Father" the resurrection will come about in us and we will become an explosion of joy. This is what must be done to grow in spirit.

Otherwise our faith will drag along in a continuous lamentation, in an endless search for "graces"

which will never be sufficient because – even if we are granted one – later on we would ask for another one because other problems will arise; and then another one... and our relationship with God will be reduced to that of beggars who always hold out their hand, asking for charity.

This is not our true reality; we are children of God, we are of royal descent. Suffering is a gift God gives us so that we can ransom our impoverished humanity and clothe ourselves with royalty.

If we don't accept the Father's gift and if we don't say "thank you!" to Him, we weaken our relationship with God and the development of our soul. Our heart hardens and is no longer in communion with the Father's Heart.

A father who brings his son to the dentist isn't delighted when the boy starts to cry because the doctor gives him a needle and takes out his rotten tooth. If this child said to his daddy on coming out of the dentist's office: "You are mean! You brought me to the dentist to hurt me; you don't love me... ", how would the father feel?

We are like this child who hasn't understood the Father's love and pain. The Father comes and tries to take care of us, to heal us completely, to free us, to make us grow, but he finds an indelicate and rebel-

lious attitude in us. If, instead of saying "thank you" to Him, we accuse Him because he sends us evil or because He doesn't free us from it, what can He do? Our of respect for our freedom He draws back and leaves us with our misery; He leaves us with our rotten teeth, which later on will become a source of greater infection.

If, instead, that child said to his daddy on their way home: "Daddy, the doctor hurt me so much, but you love me and so it means that it was necessary; thank you, daddy!" how will the father of this child feel? He will feel an infinite tenderness; he will hold him tight to his heart, happy that he was understood in his painful gesture.

If, in any circumstance, we tell our Heavenly Father: "I thank you, Father, for what you send me every day, even if it hurts: obviously it is what I need to make my spirit grow: thank you!"; what will He do? He will hold us close to Himself and will flood our heart with joy, the sign of the Resurrection that will come after death which all suffering holds. We will live the joy of holiness.

What is holiness? The new man which the Spirit of the Father creates in us when we have accepted the "gift" of the passion and of death: "No one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above" (Jn 3:4). This process of death and resurrection is the re-

sult of our daily efforts. Every day the Father gives us our "daily bread" which isn't only the Eucharist, but also suffering.

In itself suffering is a reality of death, because it "mortifies" our personality. However, if we accept it, the Father transforms it into a gift of Life, regenerating a part of us. Thanks to suffering, every day a part of our human reality dies, but rises again glorified. Day after day, "thank you after thank you", the Father destroys our feeble structure and, "Grace after Grace", accomplishes His immortal temple in us. This is holiness.

Every day we are born; every day we die; every day we rise again. Our life is marked by the Trinitarian rhythm of the Rosary which is incarnation, death and resurrection. Like Jesus, like Mary and like Job.

By the way, how did the story of Job end?

"The Lord gave Job double what he had before. He came to own fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand she-donkeys. He had seven sons and three daughters... After this, Job lived for another one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and his children's children to the fourth generation". (Job 42:10)

But above all Job became a good friend of God.

When the Lord speaks about him to those who had condemned him, He says:

"Go to Job, my servant... while Job, my servant will offer prayers for you. I shall show him favour and shall not inflict my displeasure on you". (Job 42: 8)

Job can now intercede for his brothers by speaking to God "face to face", because the old Job is dead, and a new one is born in whom lives Love in its fullness. In him lives the Father.

Let us ask Mary for the gift of gratitude, to see everything as a gift from the Father, even our mistakes.

Let us ask Mary to make of us an everlasting thanksgiving.

Let us ask Mary for the gift of interior prayer, so that our spirit will learn to repeat, at our every heartbeat: "Thank you, Father!".

And the Father will come to us, and we will also be able to intercede for our poor desperate brothers and, with our smile, we will be for them credible witnesses of the resurrection.

This is the only thing they need in order to learn to say "Thank you, Father!" too and thus rise again.

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