



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

The logic of the day after tomorrow

Friday, 16 September 2016

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 39, 30 September 2016)

A Christian must have the courage to live with “the logic of the day after tomorrow”, that is, with the certainty of the “resurrection of the body” which is also “the deepest root of the works of mercy”. In his homily at Mass in the Chapel of Santa Marta on Friday morning, Pope Francis warned against the temptation of being influenced by a “spiritualistic piety” or of stopping only at the “logic of the past and of the present”. He therefore relaunched the truth of the “logic of redemption, until the end”.

Pope Francis focused his reflection on the passage from the Gospel of Luke (8:1-3) in the liturgy of the day. “When I hear this Gospel passage it makes me smile a little”, he confided, “because some of the Apostles are against Mary Magdalene: Luke and Mark always recall the past” to the extent of writing about how “seven demons had gone out” from her. But this “poor woman was the Apostle of the Resurrection, she is the Apostle, but they do not forget”. The Pope repeated the passage from the First Letter to the Corinthians (15:12-20). Entering “into this game — this is the word that comes to mind: game — that Paul makes”, between the Resurrection of Christ and “our resurrection: ‘If Christ has not risen, neither will we’. Indeed, the Pope explained, the aim of the Apostle of the Gentiles “is clear: he wants to ensure that we enter the logic of redemption until the end”. For example, “when we recite the Creed it is beautiful that we say: ‘God, the Almighty

Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit ...”. And “until that moment we say it well”. However “the line of the Creed begins very quickly: ‘the Catholic Church, the resurrection of the dead’ or in some translations, like in Spanish, it says ‘the resurrection of the body’”. But this part of the Creed, Francis persisted, “we say very hastily: yes, better to say it in a hurry, because we do not know how it will be, the flesh makes us afraid”. Here, in the Letter to the Corinthians, “Paul puts everything into this game of the Resurrection: if Jesus did so”, it is “because we...; and if we do not do so, neither has Jesus done so”.

According to Francis the explanation is simple: “It is easy for all of us to enter the logic of the past, because it is concrete: we have seen it”. And “it is also easy to enter the logic of the present: because we see it”. However “we also have to say”, the Pope noted, “that many psychiatrists have worked to help some people understand this logic of the past and present: it is easy, it is real”. Indeed, Francis continued, “it is not very difficult, but there it also betrays us a bit, something of a ‘neo-Sadduceism’: to think with the logic of the future, “no, but in heaven, yes, but there are many people in heaven. What will it be like? Perhaps it’s better not to think about it”. It is a way of thinking that is “a bit like the ‘Sadducees’”, therefore: “Yes, the Lord loves us and will make us live, but we do not think about how, because this is difficult”. Of course, Pope Francis added, “it is not easy to enter into the totality of this logic of the future”.

Indeed, “the logic of the past is easy, the logic of today is easy” and the logic of tomorrow is also easy: “we all die” the Pope affirmed. What is difficult is “the logic of the day after tomorrow”. This is precisely “what Paul wants to announce today, the logic of what happens after tomorrow: how will it be?”. The central issue is “the resurrection: Christ is risen and it is very clear that he has not risen as a ghost”. For this reason, recounting the Resurrection, Luke speaks of Jesus’ words: “Touch me, give me to eat!”. Because “a ghost has neither flesh nor bones”. Therefore the “logic of the day after tomorrow is the logic which the flesh enters into: what will Heaven be like? Yes, will we all be there?”.

“But we do not comprehend what Paul wants us to understand”, this logic of what comes after tomorrow, the Pope explained. And “even here it betrays a certain gnosticism: no, everything will be spiritual”. The fact is, he continued, that “we are afraid of the flesh: let us not forget that this is the first heresy that the Apostle John condemns: ‘Who says that the Word of God did not come in the flesh is of the Antichrist, he is of the evil one’”. A “spiritualistic piety” is easy, a piety of nuances; but entering into the logic of the flesh of Christ, this is difficult”. However, “this is the logic of the day after tomorrow: we shall rise like the risen Christ, with our flesh”.

In this regard Francis noted that “we understand something in the prophecies” that can be helpful: for example, he said, “Job, who is a bit dark prophetically, tells us something in Chapter 19: ‘I know that my Redeemer lives and I will see him, and I will see him with my own eyes’”. However, Jesus showed that his resurrection is this way. But “the first Christians, those of Corinth, even those in Thessalonica, think: ‘Yes, yes, He was raised like this, but we perhaps.... I do not know.

Yes, we will see the Lord, but...'. And here, in the faith of the resurrection of the flesh, the works of mercy are most deeply rooted". This is "because there is a continuous connection: Christ's flesh, the flesh of his brother, the works of mercy, is flesh transformed".

Therefore "Paul says to the Christians in Thessalonica", in Chapter 4 of the First Letter: "I would not have you be ignorant about those who sleep. We shall all be transformed". Our body, Francis continued, "our flesh will be transformed and we will always be with the Lord, like the Lord, with the body and the soul, transformed: as the Lord made the disciples see and touch and eat" with him "after the Resurrection, so too we will be with the same body". And "this is the logic of the day after tomorrow", the Pope said, "which we find difficult to understand, which we find it difficult to enter". There is a beautiful phrase that can help us, Pope Francis suggested, from Paul to the Christians in Thessalonica: and we, transformed in this way, "we will always be with the Lord".

"It is a sign of maturity to clearly understand the logic of the past; it is a sign of maturity to act with the logic of the present, as well as that of yesterday and that of today", said Francis. And "it is also a sign of maturity to have the prudence to see with the logic of tomorrow, of the future". However, "it requires a great grace of the Holy Spirit to understand this logic of what will be after tomorrow, after the transformation, when He will come and will carry all of us, transformed, into the clouds to remain with Him forever". The Pope concluded by saying, "let us ask the Lord for the grace of this faith".