

Reflections

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Christ Lives Among Us

Was Christ – like so many government officials and politicians, movie stars and football stars – concerned about his popularity? No, on the contrary, Jesus avoided the admiration of those who lauded HIM and wanted to make HIM king.

But HE was concerned about the success of his mission: do men understand why HE has come? Do they understand that HE does not want to be a political liberator, but to free them from the ties of sin and the power of the devil?

Therefore, the question of Jesus continues to stand. Resounding in the heart of each man: “Who am I for you?” And then HE awaits our response.

Some, perhaps, trust in the response from history. But Jesus cannot be studied in a history book. We have to experience HIS presence and HIS action in our personal life and in the life of HIS community which is the Church. To know Christ cannot be limited to intellectual knowledge. The Little Prince would tell us, “HE can only be seen well with the heart.”

Others see in Jesus a great man, the greatest prophet who preached and lived the most beautiful message of love. And they see in HIM a world of justice and peace, but they do not discover in HIM the God full of love. And then it is us, the Christians. We believe and trust in HIM since HE is who has revealed to us the loving face of the Father.

Here we are to distinguish two levels of faith: those who believe in Jesus, Son of God, as man of the past and the others who believe in Jesus, Son of God, but as man of the present.

If I would ask a group of Christians: Where is the resurrected Jesus Christ? Some would say: HE is in Heaven! Others would tell me: Christ is among us! In reality, the Lord continues living among us: of course, no longer with a physical presence like when HE was about in Palestine; but, of course, with a real presence.

So, then, here is the dividing line among the Christians who believe in a Christ, man, of the past who has left the earth and has arisen into Heaven, and those who believe in Christ, man of the present, resurrected, but living today among us.

The first would insist in the presence of God which is in Heaven and which is in the past. Religious celebrations are – for them – more like manifestations of the remembrance: remembrance of the historical happenings in the life of Jesus.

The second also adore the Father who is in Heaven. But they will look with the same faith at the earth to discover in her Jesus Christ who is today living among them. And they will unite with HIM to work with HIM for the Kingdom of the Father in the midst of this world. They will not only celebrate the remembrance of Christ, but also HIS mystery which develops today in the history of the world, making HIM present in the bosom of the Church.

To admit that God came among men is no longer something easy. Perhaps in the eyes of many it may not be so convenient that HE, being God, took the condition of servant and that HE humbled Himself so much. Might it be, therefore, that so few good souls place HIM anew in His place: in Heaven.

But what is now unbearable for many is that this God insists in remaining among us, and worse still, is that HE identifies with prisoners, the hungry, the sick, the strangers, the poor..... because then it happens that one cannot leave one's home without encountering HIM. To go to work, to school, for a walk, to participate in a gathering without meeting HIM face to face. One can no longer encounter anyone without constantly listening in the ear: “What you do to one of these my little ones, you do to ME.”

Dear brothers and sisters, today, Jesus Christ asks us anew: “And you, who do you say I am?” What will we tell HIM? What will we answer HIM?

Do we believe HE is among us? And do we want to be HIS disciples, do we want to work with HIM and with all the brethren of good will to help to save mankind and save the world?

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