

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

222 – November 1st, 2019

The Multiplication of Loaves

As already in the time of Jesus, also today, daily bread continues being the main problem for a great part of humanity. And men today do not only suffer bodily hunger, but also hunger of spirit, of heart, of brotherhood/fraternity and love.

And this happens because as Christians we have not taken very seriously the message of the Gospel, because after so many centuries of Christianity, we have still not achieved building a fraternal world, a world of brotherhood.

It is Jesus Christ who nourishes mankind with his word of life and feeds them bread. But I do not know if you have noticed in the Gospel, the disposition which Jesus demands, before performing the miracle of the multiplication of loaves in Matthew 14, 13 – 21... the order HE gives.

First of all, HE asks of them **an act of confidence**, HE has them sit on the ground. While they are standing, they only depend on themselves: at least they sustain the possibility of seeking food themselves. They can encounter a traveling salesman, they can go and look for something. But by taking a seat, they are renouncing all possibility of depending on themselves. They will have no other remedy but to surrender themselves, to entrust themselves to HIM.

When they hear this invitation to sit, I think that not many are in doubt because they feel uneasy due to the hunger. And HE asks them to be calm, to surrender, to have confidence. Are they going to believe that HE is capable of feeding them?

What would we have done? What would we feel on the day in which we would find ourselves in need of telling HIM sincerely: give us today our daily bread. Would we not see ourselves tempted to try something else instead of turning to God? Would it not be terrible to have to admit that we have no other recourse than to turn to HIM?

Anyway, some, in a true act of faith sit down – perhaps with their eyes closed. Then the others follow them. And then there is an extraordinary moment in which the 5,000 sit down, in which all together they make an act of faith.

And when the bread begins to circulate, when everyone has had all they want, and when they see that there is some left over – I think that then nobody is too dumbfounded. The true miracle has taken place earlier. The true miracle Jesus has done with them themselves: it was the miracle of their faith and their love.

We are also faced with the same condition, the same demand: Do we believe in HIM? Do we believe that Christ is able to sate our hunger. Do we believe that HE can change our life, fill it, renew it?

And if we are sincere, it seems to me that these questions will leave us very unsure and restless. We want to believe, we desire to believe, but it is hard for us to live from faith. We have faith in the entire world, except in God.

We put our health in the hands of a surgeon. We entrust our money to a banker. And we put our life in the hands of a driver, in spite of all the accidents which take place. Life would not be possible without trusting in others.

We only do not trust in God, or we trust very little. We are convinced that we know how to drive much better than HE. Hardly does our life take a somewhat brusque change of direction – it pauses or goes faster than normal – and we begin to scream anxiously.

Let us imagine a family change of direction in which all of the children mistrust their father who is driving the car: they criticize him the whole trip; they yell at him at whatever obstacle....it would be a horrible trip. But that is what we so often do with God.

We always find very reasonable motives for not believing. Faith continues always being an act over our natural powers, a grace for which we have to be open, a darkness we must bear. Faith is having enough light to be able to move confidently in a margin of darkness.

Dear brothers and sisters, may Christ give us the grace of a profound faith, a surrender without reservations, a total confidence in HIM and his love.

Original Spanish: Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, Austin, Texas USA
cantu_carlos@hotmail.com 10232019