agenzia fides
Fondata nel 1927
Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
http://www.fides.org

VATICAN - TOWARDS THE PRIESTHOOD, Mgr Massimo Camisasca - "Remaining in the presence of Christ, vicars of Christ"

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - There exists one chief aspect of the life of those whom Christ has chosen for the vocation of priests, an aspect overlooked by the majority. The priestly vocation fills life with responsibility, in the etymological sense of the word: the priest is called to respond to the expectations of man. Christ chooses certain men to be terminals and intermediaries of man's requests. Requests for help, for understanding, mercy, prayers, meaning. Learning to discover this task for which God has chosen us helps to identify the greatest urgency of our life, as men and priests: to remain in the presence of Jesus.

Helping people, reaching out to meet needs, requests or simply listen to their words, has meaning, is truly priestly, authentically Christian, only if it is not simply «doing things for others ». Our activity - which is never in contradiction with silence and prayer which indeed at the humus from which it draws substance -, our help and our availability, must instead become «doing to others». But where to find the point from which flows this difference which may seem only linguistic, but actually summarises a revolution in our being men and priests? Precisely: from remaining in the presence of Jesus. If the position of our life in the presence of Jesus is «for Him» rather than «to Him», our activity places itself at a distance from Jesus, at a distance from the other person. Doing something for another person expresses a bond steeped in nostalgia, distance, simply because only Jesus «acted for others »; only Jesus was born, lived, died and is risen for us. For our existence and our work to be authentic help for those entrusted to our care, it is necessary therefore to be able to «do to Jesus», which means, understanding charity which is the embrace of a reality which is present. This is indicated by words of the Saviour, words which he calls definitive: «you did it to me» (cfr Mt 25, 40).

The priest is called to remain in the presence of Jesus because he is called to be vicar of Jesus among the people. The mystery of the Incarnation enables men to be with Christ, but for our being with Christ and in the presence of Christ to acquire authentic depth, it must permeate the whole drama of our life and the lives of those entrusted to us. The more we become vicars of Christ, that is, the more we identify ourselves with Him, the more we are able to enter the problems of life, able to relate to people, be in the presence of our own humanity. And this is the only path because He alone is the Saviour. Only in imitation of Jesus, identification with Him, being in truth in his presence, lies the possibility of being authentic with people.

Therefore the central question becomes: how to be identified with Christ? Precisely this is identification with Jesus: we cannot decide to love Him, we can but ask to be loved and recognise that we are loved by Him.
(Agenzia Fides 27/10/2006; righe 33, parole 517)

I contenuti del sito sono pubblicati sotto Licenza Creative Common - http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/deed.it