

My dearest, in this XXIII Sunday of the *Ordinary Time*, the Liturgy of the Word asks us to reflect, understand and try to put in action the synthesis of any commandment: that is **Charity**, as we heard in the second reading, from Saint Paul's letter to the Romans.

Today's Gospel – which you can read and meditate personally – is about the necessity to forgive your neighbour, it is about the power of the keys conferred to the Apostles; but today I'd like to share a thought with you, a thought that will help you all accomplish this commandment.

The Lord asks us to love our neighbour.

Why do we have to love him?

How can we love him?

Often, our neighbour is not easy to be loved, nevertheless the Lord tells us that the Law in its fullness is accomplished if we follow this precept, and if we don't follow it, as a matter of fact we haven't followed anything!

Consequently, we have to understand the reason that can help us accept and accomplish this commandment, which is the most important element of our life of faith.

All the rest helps to accomplish this precept, and so if it does not, it means that everything else is practically useless.

Therefore, when we look at our neighbour, we have two options:

- Either we look at him as he is, and we will almost never find any element of amiability or any reason to love him, also because we tend to be hypercritical...

Certainly, every person has limits and flaws, everyone is sinful... Therefore, if we look at people the way they are, it's very hard to have a feeling of love toward them, a positive attraction, a wish to love them with all our heart.

- **Either we look at our neighbour with a different eye: with the eye of God who sees in him the image of Jesus!**

Every person is an image of God, but has to take the image of Jesus, because human beings, when they were created, were thought **in his own image and likeness in the shape taken by Jesus.**

We have then to take into consideration this precious icon that each of us carries.

We have to take into consideration this image of God that each of us should express.

We therefore have to take into account that we are all God's children, but, most of all, we have to take into account that God wishes to save all of us with His love and take us all to *Heaven*.

Fullness of the Law is Charity

Homily, 10th September 2017

Rom 13,8-10

father G. Paparone o.p.

Those who aren't able to go to *Heaven* will get lost and, therefore, **we should feel this immense love towards the people we meet, especially towards the believers, so that they can take upon themselves the image of Jesus and thus be saved.**

If we look at the other's potentialities instead of looking at his shortcomings, our heart will then start to convert.

Surely, our prior conversion is necessary, this means that **we also have to look at ourselves with the eyes of mercy**, we have to take into consideration not our ugliness, but the beauty that we carry in ourselves and is waiting to be manifested.

Some saints have compared us, our souls, to a rough stone that can be sculpted, carved and become a pure diamond.

We have to take all the dross off our life and we will then shine.

Here we are, the only thing that can make us love the others with the same love that Jesus wants us to give them, the only way to make us live the commandments and our religion with love and for love, I believe the only way is by taking into consideration the sacred image that each human being carries inside.

Let's then pray, let's pray together this Sunday, let's pray God to enlighten us, with His Holy Spirit, to help us understand this truth more and more deeply, to strengthen our will, so that we can overcome every aversion, every obstacle, every rancour, every resentment... and be able to erase every antipathy.

The exhortation that I leave you with is the following: start, if you can, erasing the concept of antipathy from your dictionary, from your spiritual categories.