

Live as children of light

Homily, 22nd March 2020

Eph 5,9-14

father G. Paparone o.p.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

Dearest, today, the IV Sunday of Lent, the Gospel offers you a mediation on the healing of the born blind.

A very long text that you all know; a blind man is healed after washing himself with the water of the Pool of Siloam. A complex and articulated story, about a young man born blind who eventually recovers his sight.

This text can make you think of either a physical healing, or a metaphoric narration; a metaphor, indeed, used to explain **the effect of the meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ**.

We know that the **Baptism** is also conceived as an opening of the eyes, the sight, the ears, the senses; as the **beginning of a new life**.

I decided to focus on the second reading, the text from Saint Paul's letter to the Ephesians, because it is about this healing action of Jesus towards all those who have been baptized.

Someone who has been baptized is someone who has acquired a new life, after recognizing Jesus as son of God and after receiving the *sanctifying grace*.

What does this mean?

As a matter of fact, the eyes are still the same.

But, **with the eyes of the soul, he can see a new reality**.

He can move in the world in a new way.

He can see things that the others can't see.

An example: he is like a blind person who can feel the water; the water can be pure, drinkable, or polluted. The blind hears the sound of the water, but he cannot tell if it's pure or not. Therefore, if he drinks from the wrong spring, he will get polluted, get ill and die.

We can think about our life in the same way.

We are in the world, we are blind, because we don't know exactly which is the pure water and which is the polluted one. Therefore, we can experience life or death, depending on what we choose.

Faith gives us exactly the possibility to open our eyes in a way that enables us to always see where the pure water is.

While commenting this text, I thought about this image, that was certainly inspired by the Spirit, because I had never thought about it before: **our faith gives us the ability to see where the pure water is, the water that gives life.**

Isn't it beautiful?

It is not about some particular miracles; with the eyes of faith, and believing in Jesus who is the light of the world, adhering to His doctrine, His teachings, His suggestions, His example, becoming His disciples, trying to imitate His way of living, we immediately and automatically acquire the ability to tell the difference between right and wrong, between life and death, between where we can reinvigorate and where we will dry up.

Being Christians means being able to see, understand and choose what brings life in the physical reality where we live.

This is what the Book of the Deuteronomy reminds us about: when Joshua, before entering the promised land, says to his people: *choose who you want to serve!*

Saint Paul also reminds us of this truth: *For you were once darkness.*

He doesn't write "you used to be in the dark", but "you were darkness": we were darkness because our eyes were closed, ill, we were walking in the dark.

Through the faith, the eyes open up to the sight, we become light, we have a light that makes us see what brings life and what gives death.

Therefore, *live as children of light: walking in the light, being healed, seeing clearly, all this means to understand that life is only where there is goodness, truth and justice.*

Light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth: those who don't act with goodness, justice and truth show to themselves that they are still in the darkness, that they don't have yet embraced the light of Christ, that they haven't been healed yet.

Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them. Try and understand what is appreciated by the Lord.

Dearest, we all are like the born blind; nevertheless, we all were lucky enough to meet Christ, to adhere to the Gospel, to wish we will able to embrace him and to live at the light of the Gospel; but we not always show with our gestures that we are healed.

Today, let us embrace this simple standard, very practical and verifiable by everyone: we don't need to have any specific knowledge or erudition, or to read any specific book...

Saint Paul was very clear: *light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth.*

As far as we consciously, deliberately make an effort to live with each goodness, righteousness and truth, we then show ourselves that we have been healed, that we have received the sight, that we know where the water that gives life is, that we draw the water of life.

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But, if in our acts, thoughts and feelings, we embrace thoughts of wickedness, injustice, lie, hypocrisy, conflict, estrangement, indifference, we then show ourselves that we are not healed yet.

Let us examine our conscience then, implore the Lord, so that he can heal the eyes of our soul, give us His light, so that we can finally see that in goodness, righteousness and truth lies the spring of life.

May the Lord be praised.