



MISSIONARY SERVANTS OF THE POOR

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Return to the silence of Christmas

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RETURN TO THE SILENCE OF CHRISTMAS

SILENCE IS THE DOOR TO GOD



Christmas has become in many of our countries an exaltation of noise. Christmas is synonymous with parties, family reunions, shopping, gifts, get-togethers, etc. which isn't bad if it is lived in moderation. Christmas is a time of joy since "to us a child is born, to us a son is given" (cf. Is 9:6). However, Christmas is also a time of **adoration**, of getting on the road like the Wise Men going to adore the Lord (cf. Mt 2:2). While the Wise Men travelled they never ceased watching the star, of contemplating it, of watching it in silence. The term Christmas comes from the Latin *nativitas*, which means birth, since Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, a birth that we contemplate, meditate on, adore. The Blessed Virgin Mary "**pondered** these things *keeping them in her heart*" (cf. Lk 2:19). Mary teaches us that silence is the door to God, "The key to the heart of Christ."

Silence is frequently confused with indifference to our suffering brother and who not only needs a word of consolation but also our total surrender. However, it is wrong to think that living in silence distances us from our brothers. Because only if we start from the encounter with the Infinite Silence that is God will we be able to hear His same heartbeats of love for the poor, and therefore, we will be able to serve them not only from our ideas, plans, and talents, but from the constant beating of love in the heart of Christ.



Father Giovanni wrote in an old document "Solitude and Silence" the following, "***silence is golden because in silence we prepare with the Lord the desire to serve the poor.***" True silence is not only the absence of words. True silence springs from the continuous communication with the Infinite Word that is Christ.

The world, saturated with noise, information, images, and messages needs to experience silence – a deep silence full of the love of God.

It is not about emptying ourselves to reach nothingness (Buddhism) but about emptying ourselves of everything in order to fill ourselves with God – all through silence. But, let us remember that true silence is a GIFT that we must ask the Holy Spirit for constantly. It is a gift that is absolutely necessary to us, since if we do not fill ourselves with the silence of God, we will never be able to know Him and everything will remain outside.

Recall those illuminating words of Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* in which he reminds us that ***“Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”*** Indeed, Christianity is not an abstract idea but a Person: **Christ**. He is the essence of Christianity.



And it is this living and resurrected Christ Whom we must adore.

Some of you might wonder how to adore Him in the middle of our busyness and tasks. A great spiritual director who assisted the Missionary Servants of the Poor for many years, Don Felipe Gonzalez, showed that a way of carrying out this adoration is by not allowing 15 minutes to pass without having lifted a look, a sign, a small prayer to God our Father. He even said, "How is your neck?" And to answer the confusion of his listeners, he explained that he was asking this because their necks should hurt from looking at heaven so much.



Anyway, the best gift we can give this Christmas to our children, our families, our brothers is the example of being persons who love silence, who love the encounter with the living and risen Christ, who rejoice in the presence of the Lord.

But we shouldn't only think about what we are going to give to our loved ones, we should also primarily think what we will give to God. The concern of the Wise Men of the East was to meet with the living Christ and offer him their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What will we give to the Child Jesus? Our hatred, our envy, our fights? Better we should give him our desire for Adoration, for love, for service. ***Let's offer him the gold of our love, the incense of our prayer, and the myrrh of our generous daily giving of ourselves to our brothers.***





*God draws us to silence
and solitude and this same
silence is what opens every
heart to love and the
service to others.*



FR. GIOVANNI SALERNO



THE CHARISM OF THE MSP

*The two great commitments of the MSP:
Continuous conversion and
contemplation. Continuation...*

The continuation of the topic of continuous conversion.

If there is no true conversion, we aren't serving God or the poor but we serve only ourselves and gravely harm the poor.

"Son, to possess everything, you must give everything, and even if it's not your own" (Imitation of Christ, Book III, ch. 27). Let's recognize our nothingness and our emptiness, but let's place what we are in the hands of God and He will know what to do with it as Christ taught when he asked a boy to give him five barley loaves and two fish to be able to work the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and so fed more than five thousand people (cf. Jn 6:5-14).

We are not worried about what we will do because our trust is in the Lord. He is our eternal Rock.

We really cannot become good Servants of the Poor if we do not seek God through a complete and continuous conversion of heart.

Only so will we find the permanent joy which is the unmistakable seal of the Servant of God.

The MSP join to their three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, ***the promise of continuous conversion***, placing all their energies and their very existence at the service of the poor.

Contemplation

Continuous conversion is the royal path that leads to **contemplation**. In turn, and at the same time, contemplation inexorably drives us to a continuous and profound conversion.

Listening to the voice of the Lord and contemplating His Face in silence are our principal activities. Our vocation, in this line, is the highest holiness, which is realized through a continuous conversion in our way of thinking and planning our lives, renouncing all human security, trusting in God, guided by faith, open to his grace, like Jesus. "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8).

To be continued..

Fr. Giovanni Salerno



"Listening to the voice of the Lord and contemplating His Face in silence are our principal activities"

NEWS FROM OUR HOUSES

The extraordinary missions

During this whole year, the Missionary Servants of the Poor Sisters not only worked in the various mission houses they staff, but in addition, carried out several extra missions each month in various villages in the Andes.

They say that the people have been really receptive. They have taught catechism to some people and prepared others for the sacraments. They went house to house visiting people in their homes and watching over the sick they found there. They also played and shared with the children. May God bless their work.



Christmas in the cordillera

The men's Branch of the Missionary Servants of the Poor carried out several missions in various villages of the cordillera. During Christmas beautiful missions are carried out. The Missionaries spend the 24th and 25th in community, but on the 26th they leave for the missions to bring a little joy to all the children that anxiously await them.

Generous people have made it possible to bring a present to each child in the mountains. They thank all these people who help us so generously.





S.O.S

TO YOUNG PEOPLE

If you are a young man or woman or married couple, or if you wish to form a support group or be an oblate in your country, God is calling you. Don't extinguish the flame but say "yes" to Christ

contact us!



WE NEED YOUR PRAYER

THE MOST
IMPORTANT
HELP FOR THE
MISSIONARIES IS
YOUR PRAYER

REGISTER NOW



IF YOU WISH, YOU MAY ALSO HELP US
MATERIALLY

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