

Bearing Witness to the Light



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Having just lived the Advent season during which, every year, we await the coming of Christ, every baptized person is invited to answer the question asked of John the Baptist, “Who are you?”

In fact, it is important to know who we really are. Necessarily, from the moment we are alive, that means that we were loved and that we are destined to love.

Yes, in the middle of our personal history, there stands the One whom we do not know. That man is the Light. And He is the one who fills us with His incandescent Love. In fact, every baptized person is enlightened from within by the divine Light. However, we must acknowledge, as John did, that this light does not come from us. It comes from the One who is in us, in our midst. As a consequence, it is important that our life be a reflection of Christ, for the real light we carry is Jesus Christ. He is the one we must bring forth and show by means of our words and deeds.

Unfortunately, our world seems to be seduced more by those who place themselves “in the limelight”, than by those who reveal where the true Light is to be found. In all eras, there have been people who presented themselves as infallible guides and who, at times, deceived entire countries... Thus, the Gospel urges us to be vigilant, to turn our eyes to Christ and to those who bear witness to His message of love and truth.

Just as John pointed out where the Light was, that is also what we must strive to do in our situation. We must draw people’s attention to the real Savior of humanity. True enough, Jesus was not easily recognized; He was in the middle of a crowd that did not know Him. The faith of the Baptist and of a few disciples is what revealed Him.

In that regard, John the Baptist is not just a personage of the past. He is very timely, for He is still showing us the One who comes and whom we run the risk

of not recognizing because we think we know Him... Really, if we have listened carefully to the prophet Isaiah, we must believe that the Savior always comes in poverty and not in the deafening din of the great ones of this world. He comes for the lame, the prisoners, the humble of heart. So Christmas is an event that shakes up our prejudices. It is an incredible event! But that is precisely the meaning of our faith: believing in the unbelievable, believing that God is in our midst, as John the Baptist did when he pointed Him out.

Of course, these are known truths, but it is good that we put them into practice even more, for “*we do not light a lamp to put it under the bushel basket.*” (Mt 5:15) Our words and our deeds, our conduct, our manner of living, all must correspond to our identity as a child of God.

We must admit that, sometimes, our flame dies down. Thus, so that it will not die out, we must be attentive watchmen who do not fall asleep and who keep their lamps lit, fervently waiting for the Lord. From that moment, there are two things we must be attentive to and in which we must persevere, and that is prayer and union with God. If we maintain those two predispositions in our soul, the Holy Spirit will keep the divine fire constantly burning in our hearts and cause the flame of our witness to shine brightly.

Even if the darkness in the world seems to be getting worse, let us remain confident, for the Lord told us that we were “*the light of the world*”. So He gives us and will continue to give us the capacity to shine ever more. Obviously, that is no reason for us to boast. Instead, it is more an appeal to strip ourselves of our ego so as to let the light of God be reflected about us.

As we meditate on the Gospel, we can see that Heaven does not necessarily choose the most prominent persons to accomplish His divine projects. We see that John was nicknamed “the Baptist” precisely because he was practising a ritual inspired by heaven. And he did so, besides, without the Jewish institution. All of that raised questions. And yet, he

was the one who made it possible for the divine desires to be fulfilled elsewhere than in the Temple of Jerusalem. Experience has taught us that often God’s ways emerge elsewhere than where they were awaited or expected.

However, the prophet is not only the one who denounces our infidelities. He is not only the one who, forcefully and sternly, reminds us of our duties. The prophet is the passionate voice of God’s great love for us. God wants to bring us back to that full capacity of love He placed in us and of which we are sometimes forgetful. Because we have much worth in God’s eyes, He makes use of the voice or the sometimes provocative writings of certain men and women to lead us to His Heart. Thus, the prophet is the impassioned voice of the love of God for His children.

In fact, the prophet of today, as the one of the past, never leaves us totally desolate or even with a harmful feeling of guilt. He always suggests a step to be undertaken, a reaction, a movement focussing us once again on God.

Of course, because of our baptism, each one of us is also called upon to become a prophet. That is why we must proclaim the Good News with a sincere openness, and let it touch our own life first of all. Otherwise, we would simply be uttering empty words.

In order to tend towards perfection upon the Lord’s invitation, “*Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect,*” we must always continue to progress or advance, foster in our life the deep desire to grow along the path of the Gospel and never give up. It is essential that we have the certainty that God loves us, that Jesus saved us and that His love will last for ever. However, since we are Jesus’ disciples, we must be aware that, just as Jesus experienced rejection and anger, that He was driven out, so too do those things emerge on the horizon of our everyday life.

May God grant that the Queen of Prophets guide us along the path of truth and faithfulness!

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