

FR. JULIÁN CARRÓN

“God never stops seeking us”

by Paolo Perego

August 27, 2014 – The leader of CL visits the Meeting, attending talks, going to exhibits and seeing friends. “The peripheries of existence? They are they way we encounter Jesus. We discover what the essential is within each experience.”

Toccata and fugue in one day. Asked why he came, Fr. Julián Carrón, President of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation, says he came to see the Meeting, where his friends are. He has not yet seen much of the exposition center. He attended the talks by the archaeologist Giorgio Buccellati and Fr. Ignacio Carbajosa about God in ancient history, and the exhibit on Charles Péguy. He has followed the Meeting long distance, he says again, struck by Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, who he calls a friend “because of that redeemed gaze on reality” that he showed during his talk. He was also struck by the Pope and his message.

Fr. Carrón, why the peripheries? Why “decentralize” as Pope Francis said, to meet Jesus? Isn’t what we live enough? What more can we discover?

Encountering the peripheries is the way we encounter Jesus. I have always been very struck by Fr. Giussani’s insistence that we have everything in the encounter with Jesus. But we discover the meaning of this “everything,” of Jesus, in the clash or encounter with circumstances, or in other words, with the peripheries. We think that the peripheries are something added, a distraction. Instead, this is the one way in which, facing life, circumstances, challenges, we can understand who Christ is. Without this verification of Christ in every periphery we cannot understand who He is. This is why it is in our best interests to follow the Pope. If this is not the case, we will think we have met Jesus, but we will not have met Him.

Destiny has not left man alone. In the talk you attended this morning, it emerged clearly how the presence of God is a constant throughout the history of humanity. Destiny has never left man alone...

Benedict XVI said that God is never defeated. He always starts anew, undertaking new initiatives. All the facts of history are the new initiatives through which God seeks the human person in different ways. And today, too, in the present, we see what we saw happen in the past, as said this morning: the continual initiatives through which the Mystery seeks the human person, no matter what his or her situation. God never stops: He does not depend on what we would call victories or results. His starting point is different, for He always starts from a boundless love for the human person. Even though people tell Him no, do not respond adequately, or forget, God never stops seeking them, just as you would never stop seeking your son, no matter what stupid thing he had done. It is easy. We would be able to understand God if we thought for a moment what a father would do for his son. God is this father who never stops seeking His son.

The Pope invited people on a journey, indicating that the only luggage needed is the essential and reality. What are they, for you?

The essential for us is like the meaning, a presence without which reality would have no meaning. Not all things are equally meaningful for us. The essential is that which is so meaningful that you cannot live without it. This is what enables us to enter into any aspect of reality. If we have discovered the essential we can enter into any darkness, into any periphery, into any aspect of reality. What must a nurse live, how truly substantial must she be, what essential thing must have happened to her, for her to be able to walk into the room of a terminally ill patient, able to enter into that darkness? Equally, why do some Christians remain living in Syria? Or why do some people care for those considered the least? Something must have happened to them that is so meaningful that no aspect of reality loses its value. Rather, it acquires all its value through that essential thing. But often it seems that affirming the essential is against reality, or that affirming reality is against the essential. Thanks be to God, we who have encountered Christianity, as Fr. Giussani bore witness to it, and as it appears in the Gospel, see that for Jesus, affirming the essential, affirming His relationship with the Father, was not something that distracted Him from some aspect of reality or from the human person. Rather, this was precisely what made Him interested in each person. For this reason, the essential and the relationship with reality go together. Without having a presence that is so meaningful for us, so essential, reality does not interest us, because we are not able to stay in front of it, to face its challenges, certain darkneses and certain things that bewilder us.

Paolo Perego