



Conference 2 | Revelations in the Humanity of Jesus

Transcript

We're going now to do our second conference.

The Lord is calling us to walk in His presence like Abraham, and to try to live in contact with the presence of God. Yesterday we spoke about the presence of God in nature, and now we are going to speak about the presence of God in the humanity of Jesus. Maybe, before we continue on, we will entrust ourselves to the Virgin Mary; Mary, who lived in a very profound communion with her son. Let us ask of her this grace, that we also may be in this great communion with her son, Jesus:

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.*

So, for us who are Christians, we know that the man, or the most important that we can be in contact with God, it is through the person of Jesus. It is Him who gives us the access in its fullness to the presence of God, because He is real man, and real God. So through this humanity of Jesus, we are able to touch the mystery of God. So this is a reality, which is very, very rich, and very beautiful. So, we're going to start with a biblical text, from the *letter of St. Paul to the Colossians*, from *chapter 2*. We're going to do *verses 1 and 3*. It's the text where St. Paul tells us that he is living a great struggle so that he could permit or allow, to the people of God, to have access to the presence of Christ. It's a combat that he accepts with very good will, so much, that this richness of Christ is great. Here is how Paul expresses himself:

'For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face-to-face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love to reach all the riches of the full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ. In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge'.

So, this is why Paul is struggling in suffering, so we can give access to every person to this mystery of God, which is Christ Himself. And he uses this very beautiful expression in regards of Christ, and he says, *'In Him are hidden all the mysteries of wisdom and knowledge'*; in this humility of the person of Jesus who has become man for the others. In that humanity are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and



knowledge of God. And a little bit farther down *Paul* uses another very beautiful expression, and he says, ***'In Him, in Jesus, all the fullness of divinity dwells in a bodily form'***.

So, in this human person, in this physical existence, inhabits all the presence of God Himself. What this means to us is that every time we are in contact with the human person of Jesus, this establishes for us a real and true contact, a mysterious one, but with the presence of God also. It's true that this divine presence in the person of Christ is hidden. We see very well that during the time that Jesus lived on earth; many people did not recognize Him as a God, or as the Messiah who was sent. Even today we see that many, many people do not recognize; they don't recognize Jesus as God, but recognize Him, as just as a historical person, a wise person, but they don't recognize Him as God.

So, **we have this enormous grace, which is the gift of faith.** And this faith reveals what is hidden and opens our eyes. And thanks to this faith we can recognize in the human presence of Jesus, the true presence of God. God who has come to visit His people. God who wants to live in our midst. God who wants to express to us His love and His mercy, and He wants to speak to our heart. And He wants to communicate to us all the abundance of His life.

We always have this reality, which is that these, all this richness, seems to be hidden. But if we come close to the person of Jesus with faith and with love; if we believe truly that He is the gift of God for us; if we come to hear Him, to follow Him, and to believe in Him; progressively, whatever was hidden will end up being revealed. **And so, through this face of Jesus, we discover the face of God Himself, the face of the Father. So this is a great gift that has been made to us through Christ.**

This very simple truth and very profound truth that I just evoked with you; this truth is at the base at the foundation of many Christian truths; so we have a thousand ways to put ourselves in contact with God, by simply putting ourselves in contact with the human person of Jesus. It's the very, it's the first advice that **St. Teresa of Avila** gave us; an advice to her spiritual sisters; and she would say, ***'Just imagine that Jesus is sitting next to you, like your best friend, and speak with Him just as a friend would speak to his own friend. You will see that little by little, there will be something very profound that will end up being lived between you and the Lord'***.

So, we also, we can simply, maybe, look at an image of Christ that we like, and we can use; we can use many devotions which are suggested to us from the devotion of the church. We can recite the rosary while meditating the life of Christ; we can also pray the way of the cross; we can also read the Bible and contemplate upon many phases of the life of Christ. We can also hear and listen to the words of the Lord



and keep them in our heart. **It's simply just about welcoming the person and the life of Jesus in all the different moments of the existence of Christ.**

Through these events, where the story, the person, all the events of the life of Jesus, all these in a mysterious manner, put us in contact with God. It also allows God to speak to us and to act in our own existence. You see, it's truly the person of Christ who gives us access to the person of God. There's all the richness of His love and of His mercy.

So, something which is very beautiful to understand which I'm going to expound about a little bit here, they are what we call the 'mysteries' of the life of Jesus. For example, when we pray the rosary, we speak of the joyful mysteries, the sorrowful, the luminous, the glorious mysteries. And all these mysteries are simply each of a moment or an event in the life of Jesus in His historical, human history / existence, which was in our midst.

The first of these mysteries is, of course, the incarnation. **The incarnation of Jesus in the womb of Mary at the moment of the annunciation is the first and the most profound of them all.** After that, there are the nine months which Jesus spent in the womb of Mary, which is also a reality that is very, very important. Then there is the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem in the poverty of the manger. And then we have the visit of the shepherds and the magi a little bit later. There are also all the events of the childhood of Christ, His hidden life in Nazareth after that. And then, there will be the baptism of Christ, and then the temptation in the desert. All these events of the apostolic life of Jesus, all the different preachings that Jesus has done, all the healings, the miracles, the liberations, and these beautiful encounters with so and so of the people; His life with the apostles and the disciples.

And then there's also the sorrowful mysteries: the mystery of how He was betrayed, the agony in the garden, the cross. And thankfully after that, there is the resurrection, after three days. And then the 40 days that Jesus spent teaching after His resurrection. And the last one of all these mysteries of the life of Christ is therefore the ascension, where Jesus in His humanity, enters in the glory of the Father forever. And He sits at the right hand of God, and 10 days later, He will send His Holy Spirit, which is the conclusion of the mysteries of Christ. And then the Holy Spirit is going to accomplish this mission, which is the mission of Christ.

Something very good for us to understand, which is something that we celebrate in our personal devotion, but also in our Christian life, and that is that **each one of these mysteries of Jesus, each one of these moments of His life, from the historical point of view, these are events that have obviously**



passed and happened. But at the same time, these are events that keep and persevere a permanent interest, which is definitive. They are for us today, even, source of grace.

I would like to read for you a small passage from a spiritual father from the 17th century. His name was **cardinal of Berulle**. He was very much influenced by St. Teresa of Avila, and it was him who brought Carmel to France. He was also a very influencing person in the renewal, in the 17th century, in the spiritual life, in France. It was a great renewal, which was mystical, apostolic, and spiritual, in the 17th century. And he had a very great influence and importance in that renewal. And so, he speaks to us in the ways in which we would consider this mystery of the humanity of Christ, as something that remains always present and lively, alive. We are going to read this passage.

'We must consider the perpetuity of these mysteries in a certain way, for they have passed in certain circumstances, and they last in our present, and perpetual in some other way. They are passed in execution, but they are present in strength and their strength never fades, nor will the love ever pass with which they were fulfilled. The spirit, therefore; the state, the strength, the myriad of the mystery is always present. This obliges us to treat the things and mysteries of Jesus, not as things past and extinct, but as living and present, and even eternal, from which we also have to receive present and eternal fruit.'

What cardinal de Berulle is trying to say in this very, very beautiful text, even if now all the events of the life of Jesus are events that have occurred and happened; even though they passed they keep their strength, and they are always present to us. They have sort of an eternal value, because the love in which they were lived, is a love that will never pass. It is *St. Paul*, who tells us, '*Charity, love... never dies*'. Therefore, **what gives an eternal value to all the moments and events of the life of Christ, is this infinite love in which each one of these events was lived.** It's because of His love that Christ was incarnate in the womb of Mary. It's because of His love that He was born in poverty in Bethlehem. It's because of love that He preached, that He made miracles, that He called His disciples. It is because of His love that He is dead, that He died on the cross. It is because of His love that He was risen, that He ascended into heaven, and that He sent His Holy Spirit. So each one of these events of the life of Jesus was accomplished because of love: His human love of His human heart, but also His divine love of His divine person. And this is what makes that this love be eternal, and that's what makes, of each one of these events, an event which is eternal, a grace.

And from these events, even today, we can draw fruits. And he (this *cardinal*) applies this thought in particular to the childhood of Jesus, by saying that **His childhood happened in the past. But it is, nevertheless, still a real and living reality which brings the presence of God.** And we can read this small passage: '*The childhood of the Son of God is a passing state. The circumstances of this childhood have*



passed, and He is no longer a child. But there is something divine about this mystery, which perseveres in heaven, and which operates in a similar manner of grace in souls which are on earth, which it pleases Jesus Christ, to affect and dedicate to this humble and first state of His person'.

So you see, **there's something divine in this reality of this childhood, which continues to come encounter us, and to move us, even today.** And what is wonderful is that in each one of these events, of these moments of the life of Christ, which our reality is always living, always present; is that in each one of these events, there are two things: on one side, there is a light which is given to us, but also a grace, which comes to touch us. A light that enlightens us, and that helps us to understand the mystery of God, the mystery of Christ, and that helps us to also understand all the truth of the human vocation, the sense of direction for our life, for our own history.

But these mysteries are not simply just lights that enlighten our intelligence, but they carry also a strength, a grace, that comes to touch us, that comes to purify us, to heal us, and to transform us. Maybe these are not things that we feel every day in a very strong way, but there could be in our life, nevertheless, moments which are very, very important. Maybe while meditating a certain passage in the gospel, for example, we receive a light, which is extremely profound and very beautiful. At the same time, we are touched deep in our heart; there could be some liberations, some healings, that are attached to this or that mystery of Christ. I think it is here that exists an element very essential to our Christian Life.

And that's what we do through our liturgical year; each year we go over and over, and anew over the mysteries of the life of Christ, which is taught to us by these mysteries. **And not only teach us, but through these mysteries, God can also come to transform our heart.** So, there's this beautiful cycle of the liturgical year, and there's also all this personal prayer, which is ours, and one of the fundamental dimensions of the Christian prayer, is to **put ourselves simply in contact with the life of Christ, with the presence of Christ, which will put us in the mystery of God. Which makes that, little by little, the mystery of God can penetrate our life and transform us.**

In the text of this *letter to the Colossians*, which I read with you earlier today, there's another verse which is also very beautiful. *Paul invites us to be rooted in Christ*, founded on Christ; this is, after all, our Christian Life; through the liturgies, the sacraments, and also through our personal prayer, we become more and more in rooted in this mystery of Jesus. And I believe this is truly necessary, especially today; **for a tree to be able to hold up to a great storm, it needs to have very profound roots. When our human history passes through some moments which shake us, we absolutely need to make more**



profound and deep our roots in Christ, in this immense mystery of Christ which we will never end up finishing of deepening.

In this, in one of his books, **St. John of the Cross**, who is a very great spiritual master in the Middle Ages (Oh! Excuse me! In the 16th century, in Spain), he wrote a book which is called '*The Spiritual Canticle*'; it's a poem, which is commented after that. He speaks of the superior and profound caverns of Christ, and he uses the certain image, and he says, '*You see, there are certain mines where we... um... where we dig caves and caverns to be able to get to different galleries, and then we can go more and more deep and profound, and endlessly we end up discovering gallery after gallery, and we discover new treasures*'. And he says, '***This is the mystery of Christ; it is absolutely inexhaustible. And in the mystery of Christ, we can always and always find more profound things because in it there is an infinite richness***'. And he, *St. John of the Cross* says, also, '***Even if many saints, many spiritual fathers of the church have discovered many and a lot of things already, there remains a lot more to discover. That much is this richness in the Life of Christ, is inexhaustible.***'

I believe this is our Christian life, you see: that's day after day, year after year; to live this contact with Jesus, His existence, His words, His life, His mysteries. And to discover more deeply the wisdom, and the richness of the love of God. And all the plans, also, that God has for His creation. So I would like maybe, to take a particular point of view, an example, to show you how one mystery of Christ can be at the same time a source of light, and a source of grace.

The mysteries are very numerous, obviously, but I'm going to take simply one mystery, the mystery of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. This little child who was born in poverty in Bethlehem became a human child, but who is in the same time, God himself coming to visit us. That's what we're going to do soon, hopefully. We're going to be in front of the manger, we're going to look at Jesus, the sheep, the shepherd, the manger... and we're going to sing all the beautiful chance of Christmas. And we need to ask the Lord that this mystery is capable of touching us each time anew. This mystery of Christmas gives us a great teaching, a great lesson on the mystery of God Himself.

When we examine the Old Testament, we see often this desire that people had to see God. We find this in the *Psalms*, '*Lord, I seek Your Face, show me Your Face*'. And we find that with Moses also, when one day *Moses* said to the Lord, '*Lord, I beg You, show me Your Face*'. And *the Lord* said to Moses, '*No, Moses. This is not yet possible because you will die. I will pass in front of you, therefore. But you will not see My Face, you will only see My Back*'. **So the first time, the very first time that human beings really saw the Face of God, and we looked upon someone who was really, actually, God, what did we see? We saw a little baby.**



This is something that really, we did not want to imagine, that the very first time that God would make Himself visible to the human gaze, what did God offer us as a face? **He offered us the face of a little baby, full of tenderness, of gentleness.** Even a baby who is poor, at the same time depending on the others, completely abandoned in the hands of man. The very first time that man saw God, this is what we saw.

This is not at all what we imagined; we did not end up seeing a chief of an army, all-powerful. We did not see an extraordinary prince in his immense royal palace. Instead, **we saw the fragility of a little baby, and for us, this is a great light on the mystery of God. God is not here to crush us, nor to dominate us like a chief of an army would do. Instead He is here to be given to us like a little child. A child of whom we can never be afraid.** It's *St. Therese of the Child Jesus* who said, '*How can I even be afraid of a God, who made himself so little?*'.

When there's a little baby who is born in a small, in a family, everybody welcomes him. Everybody rejoices in their presence. Everybody wants to see this new head of this child, of this new life. Everyone wants to take them in their arms. I believe and I'm persuaded that that's what happened to the shepherds. They took the infant child Jesus in their arms, and Mary would have given them the permission to take the infant Jesus in their arms, even if there was a little bit of dust on their clothes, and they smelled like their sheep. They were capable to carry God in their hands by carrying this little child. And what a great joy that must have been for their heart, this gentleness of God, this humility of God, and the charity of God.

And *St. Bernard* asks this question to the infant of Bethlehem, '*What made of you so small?*'. And he understood it was love. **It's simply love that made God become so little, and that's how He chose to come to enter our hearts.** Not to be violent upon us, but to allow Himself to be loved, just as we would welcome and love a small child. A God that we can welcome. A God that we can love. A God of whom we are never afraid.

So these great lights upon the mystery of God, I also believe is a great light on the mystery of the human life; this path that meant, that allows men to realize himself, it's not the path of greatness, of grandeur, of richness. **But instead it's a path of love, it's a path of humility. 'He who wants to be great, let him become the smallest of all'.**



So this mystery of Christmas speaks to us of God, but it also enlightens us on the meaning and the good way to live. Obviously, we can say many, many more things, but there are so many beautiful lights that this mystery of Christmas can give us, a thousand times than what I was capable to say today. So, as I said earlier, **this mystery of Christmas is not simply for us just a light, but also a grace. It's a blessing for us; there is something in it that can almost as if visit us, change us, move us... but also, heal us.**

I think that **if God wanted, through Christ, to go through the phase of childhood, that is also I think to heal us from our childhood. Sometimes we also have been hurt: sometimes at conception, or in the womb of our mother, or maybe in our childhood. If Christ went through all these steps, it's because it's... He did that, so that in us, everything that needs to be healed, can be healed.**

Welcoming Christ, welcoming the child Jesus, whom we take in our heart, in our life, and we walk with Him day after day, there is a certain interior work that is produced in us, which is not always felt, of course. And it might require a lot of time, but it is like a true path of healing, which is interior. Whatever was hardened in us and wounded, we can then find a heart of a child; find anew simplicity, or a gentleness, a humility, the capability to be able to allow ourselves to be loved, of freedom to love. We end up receiving a new heart, and we find anew in us, a heart of a child. This is what a great conversion is. **If you don't become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. And I think this means of becoming again a new child.**

It is not through violent efforts, but it's more so in welcoming what is given to us, by opening our heart to the presence of Jesus in His childhood. We know, for example, that st. Therese of the Child Jesus, St. Therese of Lisieux, ever since she was very little girl she wanted to be a Carmelite, a religious, but she was very fragile from the emotional point of view because of the death of her mother when she was four years old and also others sufferings in her life. So, when she was 14 years old, she absolutely wanted to enter Carmel, but she was still very, very fragile. And there on the day of Christmas, in the year 1886 after the midnight mass where she had just received communion, she received a very profound grace of healing. She found again in her this interior strength which she had lost at four years old, and that strength permitted her to make this beautiful path of sanctity, which she walked during her Carmel in Lisieux. How much this mystery of Christmas, was for her, a source of Grace?

Of course, this is not always spectacular. We can have many very strong moments that are, that people come to know; when we are deeply moved by this mystery or that mystery of Christ, which converts our hearts and heals us; but **very often it is just in faith that we walk this path. We welcome these mysteries and we meditate upon them. So there is a deep profound work that must be done. We**



don't see the fruits right away. But one day, we perceive that there's this thing or that, that was changed within our heart.

In the prologue of the Gospel of *St. John*, we find this beautiful phrase, *'To all those who welcomed Him, He gave the power to become children of God'*. **It's by welcoming this child of Bethlehem that we also truly become children of God and we can also grow then, in this freedom of the children of God.**

So this little reflection that I made in regards of Christmas, we can take in the same manner, all the mysteries of the events of the life of Jesus, and that's what the tradition of the church has done and continues to do. To be able to develop this richness of the mysteries of Christ, and to enroot ourselves in Christ, and allow us little by little to be enlightened and transformed by these mysteries. **Even if this happens in the dryness, we must persevere, and we must desire this contact with God through Christ, and to try to be faithful, each one according to the grace received to him or her, or according to our own paths, there are all the possibilities that were given to us to enter in contact with God through the humanity and the person of Jesus.**

In celebrating the Liturgy, but also in our own personal piety; sometimes through very simple things. I would like to give an example, which is also important in the tradition of the church. There is a form of prayer, which is very present in the forms of prayers and the Eastern Orthodox church, and we call it 'The Prayer of Jesus'. It's a form of prayer, which is extremely simple, which was born in the monastic places in the early church, which is also practiced today very much by other Catholics also, which is based simply on the name of Jesus. And it is just simply repeating a very simple prayer which contains the name of Jesus. For example, ***'Lord Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, have mercy on me, a sinner'***. It's a prayer that is repeated, gently and slowly, while trying to be very attentive to these words. And to allow these words to penetrate and come down in our heart, and we repeat them gently. During a certain moment, or certain length; we should not force this on us, on ourselves, but to do it according to the grace which is given to us. And this can help us to enter in the presence of God.

Because, you know, in the tradition of the Bible, when we pronounce the name of someone, it's not simply by politeness or etiquette, or like a state, civil state; but the name represents truly that person. It represents their profound identity and their mission. When we keep and maintain in our heart the name of Jesus, it's an aspect of the humanity of Christ, when He lived as a human person, He had His Name *'Jesus'*, which means, *'God saves'*; and simply saying the Name of Jesus in a way that is very simple, we can be in contact with the humanity of Jesus. So, it's a contact with God. Simply if I just **say the name of Jesus and I say it with faith, and I say it with love**, I can say it in a thousand different possible ways. *'Lord, Jesus, forgive me'*. I can say, *'Jesus, I love you'*. I can say, *'Jesus, You are here'*. *'Jesus, I know that*



You love me and I want to love You back'. These are very simple words, but while carrying within our heart this name of the Lord, the name of Jesus, we are in real contact with Him in a way which is hidden, mysterious, but we are truly in contact with God. And God makes His presence in our heart. Of course, it is mysterious, it is hidden. But if we are faithful, and if we are faithful to invoke the name of Jesus, God will be truly present in our life and in our heart. ***'Whoever invokes the name of the Lord will be saved', tells us the Scripture.*** If we invoke the name of Jesus with love, with faith, in a very simple way when it is necessary for us and when we desire to pray, it could be one simple means or way to be able to be in contact with God, and to welcome and receive the presence of God in our heart.

There are a thousand ways, you see. And through Jesus, we have a thousand doors which can be opened to be able to welcome the divine presence in our life. Sometimes we will end up feeling a lot of gentleness, a lot of joy. Sometimes we feel nothing at all, but it is not important; **what's important is to go forward in our faith and trust. And one day after the other,** but to take advantage of these simple and easy means that can help us to open ourselves to God, to the person of Christ in all the diversity of His historic and human existence as we had known it.

I think I'm going to stop here.

And may the Lord grant you His blessing, and may He aid each one of you, in your life, to find the presence of the Lord, through this path of faith, of simplicity, of prayer; so that you can be truly enrooted in Christ, and that you can truly receive the strength from God, which we are all in need of. Amen.