



Cavanis Lay Fraternity
Sacred Heart House, CAVANIS INSTITUTE
Via Col Draga - Possagno (TV)

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The spiritual journey of the believer, even today, is often interpreted in a moral key as a journey of liberation from sin, through the exercise of an interior discipline based on mortification and renunciation. The risk of this approach is to consider salvation as a goal deserved with our struggle, earned through our moral commitment, almost the reward due to our inner effort.

This way of seeing, however, nullifies the sacrifice of Christ: if my merits or works of justice save me, the cross of Christ is no longer necessary. On this the Apostle Paul is categorical: *“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit”* (Tit. 3, 4-5).

What doesn't work is our comprehension of the mystery of sin that, in the New Testament, before an action for which we are responsible, is a condition of which we are victims. Above all, the apostle John helps us to understand this when he distinguishes between "*sin*" and "*sins*"; in the Greek text the two situations are specified, not only through the use of the singular or plural (as in the Italian translation), but by the use of two different terms.

Sin, in the singular, is identified by the term *amartia* which indicates not so much something that is done, but rather something that is not available (*amartano* in Greek, means “not to have”, “to lack ...”); *Sins*, in the plural, are instead identified by the term *adikia* (*infringement of justice*) or *avomia* (*infringement of the law*) and these are the fruit of our radical weakness.

But what excludes us from the fullness of life is sin, and "*the sin of the world (amartia)* is this" - Jesus always says according to the testimony of John - "*because they do not believe in me*" (John 16: 9). The key is therefore *to believe* (etymologically "*to give the heart*"), that is to enter in that dimension of familiarity with God that Jesus came to realize through "*the new and living way*" of the Incarnation.

The liturgy of the Assumption, celebrated in this month of August in which I am still preparing the text in advance that we will use to renew the commitment of the Invisible Monastery, it reminds us that to our fragility was given as gift a Mother who shared with us the struggle in the journey on

earth and that she has inaugurated for us the entrance into the homeland of Heaven, next to her blessed Son. To believe, therefore, is first of all welcoming the Son in us, generating him through faith and giving him through service. This was the sensitivity of the Founders, Fr. Anthony and Fr. Mark, and we want to allow ourselves to be guided by it at the beginning of this new pastoral and school year.

From the book of Revelation of St. John Apostle (Rev. 11, 19a; 12, 1-6a.10ab)

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. But her child was snatched away and taken to God and to his throne; and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming,

*“Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Messiah.”*

**From "THE CAVANIS AND THE DEVOTION TO OUR LADY" by Fr. Giovanni De Biasio,
in www.cavanis.org**

To the love of dear Mother Mary, they attributed graces and helps also for the material needs of the life of the juvenile group (Marian Congregation), of the Schools and of the new Congregation born in 1819-20, for example: the purchase of the building for the Schools and for the Retreats, the payment of debts, the ending of heavy bureaucratic practices: they kept a record of all this in the Diary of the Congregation. We must therefore say that the term "patronage" meant two great expressions of their faith and their devotion to Mary: a) the certainty that Mary, to whose maternal heart the dying Jesus had entrusted humanity, was present. She watched, protected their life, their work and the young people entrusted to them with her prayer; b) total trust in Mary that became the ideal example of acceptance of the Will of God, of listening to the Word, of purity and chastity, of gratuitous love: therefore, we entrusted ourselves to her to make the journey of life with her help.

(...)

In the history of Catholic spirituality, the initiative to celebrate a Marian Year is owed to our Founders. There is no previous news on this. We know the Marian month which in the West is in

the month of May, due to popular devotion, characterized by the prayer of the Rosary and the practice of the *"little flower"*. In the East, a Marian month on a liturgical basis develops very early: for the Orthodox it is the month of August, centered on the great feast of the Dormition of Mary (The Assumption of Mary into Heaven), while for the Copts it is the month of December with the great solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord. Having celebrated a Marian year three times in their lives, together with the other brothers of their new religious Congregation and the students of the two Institutes testifies to how deep the devotion to Mary Most Holy was in our two venerable Founders, how they felt alive and active her maternal love, necessary the imitation of the virtues, with which confidence they invoked her protection. We also obtain it from the prayer "O DEAR MOTHER MARY".

(...)

Fr. Anthony observes: "He leaves us Mary as Mother, if we want to be disciples", if we are willing to take her into our home, participant and support of our consecrated life and our apostolate. Depending on this fundamental icon, we find other images of Mary for the three parts in which is divided the prayer that our Founders taught us to ask daily and insistently: 1) holiness for us and for all; 2) that our Institute grow and be strengthened for the glory of God and for the good of the "abandoned" youth; 3) the victory over evil, with the help of the Immaculate, and the blessing on all the sacrifices and educational commitments intended to "gather, guard and lead the youth to the Heavenly Home".

