

***Cavanis Lay Fraternity***

***Sacred Heart House, CAVANIS INSTITUTE***

***Via Col Draga - Possagno (TV)***

***INVISIBLE MONASTERY 02nd October 2021***

I worked on the drafting of our contribution in the days preceding the 25th Sunday of Ordinary Time and my attention stopped almost exclusively on the beautiful word in St. Mark’s Gospel. In the text resounding a word of Jesus that the disciples have already heard (cf. Mk 8:31), but to their ears it always appears hard, even strange: *“The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”* (Mk 9,31). ***Hand over****,* ***kill****,* ***rise again***: three verbs that offer the sequence of a dramatic and paradoxical story, unheard of, the 'paschal' event of Jesus. Of these three verbs, one in particular offers a light to reach the heart of the events that are incomprehensible in themselves. It is the verb to ***hand over*** *("he will be handed over into the hands ...": paradidotai eis cheiras)*, a verb that dominates the whole via crucis of the Son of man: Judas, the disciple who betrays him, hands him over to the soldiers; the soldiers to the leaders of the people; the leaders of the people to Pilate and these to the crucifiers. But the paradox is that the Father himself consigns the Son to death and in this death it is God who delivers himself up to man, to give himself, to offer his own life for man. Hand over, kill, rise again: three obscure verbs for the disciples who follow their thoughts, that are searching for a face of Jesus which is very different from the one that he is now presenting to them. The disciples do not comprehend this logic which seems absurd to them. But even though they don't understand, they are afraid to ask: *“…they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him”* (Mk 9, 32). Instead, it is Jesus who asks a question: *“What were you arguing about on the way?”* (Mk 9, 33). But the disciples keep silent, *“for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest”* (Mk 9, 34). But Jesus responds to their silence and his response is disconcerting and true at the same time. *“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all”* (Mk 9, 35). Jesus takes seriously the disciple's desire, to be first, that is to be fully realized, to be able to emerge in life. But the answer that Jesus offers is disconcerting: he reverses that path that the disciple believed to be able to take to become the greatest. For Jesus, being the greatest is not placing oneself on the other, but serving, giving up oneself, being a gift for other. I believe that this suggestion, evoked by the Word, could constitute a sort of prophecy for our FLC: Our bond with the Congregation (and therefore with the charism of which it is the guardian) will be all the more true and profound, the more we will be able to assume and concretely live the humble attitude of service and blessing. In the month of October, that invites us to turn our gaze to the missionary dimension of the Church, we could welcome this invitation as a specific consignment for all of us.

May the Lord bless us and accompany us.

**From the holy Gospel according to Saint Mark (Mk 9, 30-37)**

Jesus and his disciples left that place and went on through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them: “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house, he asked them: “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them: “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them: “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

**Communication from the Procurement of Missions**

*“To save a young man I am also willing to go to America”. This is how Father Mark Anthony Cavanis thought, who had well understood how important the education of the youth was. Seeing in the streets of Venice the poor dispersed children that were abandoned not only by the families, who suddenly became impoverished, but also by the public authority that considered them the "scum" of society. It was really about saving lives and promoting "civil society" through instruction and education of minds and hearts of children. Fr. Mark together with his brother Anthony dreamed of being able to help as many young people as possible, and to do this he was willing to face any sacrifice, even long and stressful journeys when there were still no means of transport available as today.*

*The dream-desire of Fr. Mark did not disappear with his death, but it was cultivated by many other Cavanis and became concrete with the departure of the first three Cavanis Fathers Fr. Livio Donati, Fr. Mario Merotto and Fr. Francesco Giusti, sailed from Naples for Brazil on December 9, 1968.*

*(…)*

*As missionaries we are called to be witnesses and prophets. We must look at this time we live in and the reality that surrounds us with eyes of trust and hope. We are certain that, even in the midst of the pandemic and the consequent crises, which will still accompany us for a long time, the Lord has never abandoned us and continues to accompany us. God's Kingdom is not just a promise for a future that we still feel too far away. His Kingdom has already been inaugurated, it is already present: if we know how to read the signs and, as authentic missionaries, we make it known so that it may be a regenerating hope for all. The Church celebrates the month of October as a missionary month and on the penultimate Sunday of the month celebrating the World Mission Day. This event aims to nourish the universal fraternity of the Church, that is, communion with all the Christian communities scattered throughout the world, in addition to the commitment of solidarity with the more recently formed Churches, with those who live in the poorest countries and with those who suffer persecution.*

*We Cavanis, religious and lay, will celebrate the first Cavanis Mission Week from 4 to 11 October 2021 in all schools, works and parishes entrusted to our care. It will be an opportunity to build fraternity with all our brothers and show our solidarity with the newly formed missions, in particular Mozambique and East Timor. Therefore, the offerings that will be collected will be used to facilitate the return of the Cavanis Fathers to Mozambique and alleviate the suffering of many of our Mozambican brothers who have lost everything with the passage of the rebels, and for the construction of a small seminary in East Timor.*

*(Fr. Piero Fietta, September10, 2021)*

