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

INVISIBLE MONASTERY

04.2023

While I was working on the text that we will use to renew our invisible bonds of communion, I still have in my heart the echo of the extraordinary Gospel of the Fourth Sunday of Lent in which it is proposed to us, with extraordinary intensity, the great John's theme of light, a clearly Christological symbol, but at the same time ecclesial and sacramental. In fact, the episode narrated by John has been reread by the Fathers as an icon of the baptismal journey, so much so that in the Eastern tradition, the baptism itself is called with the term 'illumination', that is, openness, through faith, to the gift of light that is Christ. The miracle narrated by John and in particular the progressive encounter between the blind man and Jesus, through the dynamic of the passage from darkness to light, becomes a symbol of faith as a discovery of the face of Christ and adherence to him. The arrival point of faith is expressed in the final dialogue and in the wonderful encounter between Jesus and the healed blind man. Jesus, returning to the scene after the long discussion between the Pharisees and the blind man, takes the initiative, looking for the one he had healed. And the remark is significant: "he knew that they had driven him out" (v. 35). Man in his solitude and marginalization has the possibility of meeting someone who gives meaning to his life: Jesus. "Do you believe in the Son of man?" (v. 35). Jesus' question shows that the blind man does not yet know the identity of those who are before him: he has sensed something, he has made a journey, but now a qualitative leap is required of him. He sees but, paradoxically, does not see yet. It is the quality of seeing that needs to be deepened. This qualitative leap is given by the verb 'to believe': "You believe... and who is... Why do you believe in him?" (v. 36). "You have seen him: he is the one who speaks with you" (v. 37). I like to think that this image reflects not only the interior and personal situation of each one of us, but also that of our Fraternity.

The weariness of our associative life and the struggle of the journey resemble in some ways a form of blindness which, however, the encounter with Christ and, above all, our faith in Him, can heal. Let us ask the Lord to enlighten the awareness of our call to service and our adherence to the charism of Fr. Anthony and Fr. Mark Cavanis.

Mary, Queen and Mother of the Schools of Charity, pray for us.

From the Holy Gospel according to saint John (9, 1-37)

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So, they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”
The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore, his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”
So, for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him,

“Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.

“Is it still possible to start the process of transformation and change?”

www.cavanis.org (27.02.23) -
Fr. Diego Spadotto, CSCh

We have occupied many “spaces” but we have not calculated well the speed of the “time” that passes, we have invested in the “quantity” of the works / activities / houses / communities and not on the spiritual quality of the people destined for these works, on their charismatic identity and on their real ability to be “good administrators of the Lord’s goods”. We have multiplied the “works” without having and forming “men of government” and formators, capable of governing and credible for authority. Now the bill to pay has arrived. Like the disciples of Emmaus, “we hoped that”, we are disappointed and lost.

“The harvest (youth) is plentiful but there are few workers” and they are not interested in the “harvest”. What happens in our congregation is common to all religious life, “spaces” are closed, people are “recycled”. All is useless, if processes of change in the formation and transformation of “spaces” in full fidelity to the charism are not initiated.

In the Church, all religious are called to address the emerging issues of our time related to the seriousness of the situation of children and youth in the countries where they are in mission: the lack of sensitivity and spiritual formation in families; the impact of new technologies; the school reality and integration to ensure freedom of education; school dropout; the relationship between education and job placement; the university world as one of the most important spaces for meeting young people; and the vast field of culture.

The greatest challenge is to intercept the demand for spirituality rising from the new generations, both in rich countries and in the economically poorer and more exploited ones, where hope for a more just life has been extinguished. The document *“Enlarge the space of your tent”* from the year of synodal reflection on youth, highlighted that in this context of international tension, young people are the category most marked by loss and isolation.

As educators let us ask ourselves what are the most appropriate processes to re-establish dialogue and trust with young people accustomed to a multiplicity of messages, relationships, interests, which make less relevant the religious experience intended as belonging, participation, identification with the ecclesial community.