

CATECHESIS 4

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RAY YOUNGSTERS PROPHETS OF THE KINGDOM

CATECHESIS 4

Charity and Good Samaritan

BEGINNING PRAYER

Oh, Jesus, Divine Model of Charity, give me those pure feelings of love my fellow, of which you have left us such admirable examples; Lord, may I love my fellow men for love of you, helping them in their needs; and that, suffering their weaknesses in this world, for love of you, may one day sing your praises with them, on earth as well as in heaven! Amen!.

BIBLICAL ENLIGHTENMENT (Luke 10, 25 – 37)

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

AGUSTINIAN ENLIGHTENMENT

(De Trin., VIII, 8, 12 (grifo nosso). 18 Disc. Chr., 4,4. 19 In ep. Joan. ad Parthos, VIII, 4. 20 In ep. Joan. ad Parthos, IX, 10).

Extend your love to those who are near you, yet do not call it as an extension. As when you love them who are close to you, it is almost like loving yourself. Extend your love to those unknown, who have not done you any ill. Go even further; go as far as to love your enemies.

He who loves his brother also loves God. Yes, if he loves his brother, he necessarily loves God who is love itself. Is it then possible to love his brother and not love love? He must necessarily love love itself. But just because someone loves love, he also loves God? Oh yes, in loving love, he loves God [...]. If God is love, whoever loves love, loves God. Therefore, love your brother and you consider yourself assured. You cannot say, I love my brother, but I do not love God. As you will be lying, if you say, I love God, if you do not love your brother. It would be a mistake for you to say, I love my brother, thinking that you do not love God. You who love your brother necessary loves Love itself.

MAGISTERY ENLIGHTMENT

(Cardinal Orani João Tempesta, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro)

This year, when we speak of charity in the sense of fraternal, helpful and disinterested love, I can think of another word that has a meaning very rich in evangelical parables, especially in the evangelist Luke: mercy.

This is defined in the Portuguese language as “the virtue that leads to compassion for the miseries of others”. Precise definition in which each word has its meaning and, therefore, deserves, even if succinctly, a deepening.

Virtue is the constant disposition or force of the soul that leads us to do good and avoid evil. Compassion, in turn, is suffering with (*cum + passio, passionis, in Latin*), that is, my theoretical interest in the problems of the other is not enough.

On the contrary, I am called - following the example of Christ who came from the bosom of the Father to share with us all the vicissitudes of this life, except sin - to “feel on my skin” what my brother feels, in order to understand his drama and tirelessly seeks an effective way out of the evils that affect him.

Having said this, there is no way to not immediately think about the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37), immerse yourself in this narration of Jesus and extract practical consequences for our daily life surrounded by so many natural beauties, but also for not a few, not even small human ailments that require immediate solutions.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOPIC

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus presents two ways of looking: one that is indifferent; go, but pass (priest and Levite); and another who sees, remains, commits and commits himself (Samaritan). Only by looking at the world with the eyes of God (the Samaritan gaze), it is possible to perceive and welcome the cry that emerges from the various faces of poverty and the agony of creation (DGAE 2019/2023 n. 102). The gaze that sees and follows represents all indifference and contempt for the life of the other.

The priest and the Levite separate from the wounded man, since they do not have time for him. The Samaritan approaches the victim of the thieves and, moved by compassion, spends his time and spends the night with him at the inn. The next day, he pays for the expenses of his stay and promises to return to the owner of the shelter everything he has spent extra to take care of the person who suffered the assault.

The unexpected stance of the Samaritan contains the center of Jesus' teaching: the neighbor is not just someone with whom we have ties, but everyone with whom we approach. It is not the Law, the blood bond or the emotional bond that establishes the priorities, but compassion, which drives us to do for others what is possible for us, breaking with all indifference. The law is this: everyone must be loved, without distinction.

Being able to feel compassion is the key to obedience to the will of God, who loves all of creation: to serve.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ESSENTIALLY SAMARITAN

We must be aware that life is essentially Samaritan: it provides care for the other in its most radical sense. Acting like a good Samaritan implies a new learning obtained by the conversion brought about by Jesus and his Good News. Only in and through Jesus Christ do we learn to care and be cared for. It is conversion that makes us choose the basin of Jesus and not that of Pilate. He used the bowl before Pilate to wash his hands, that is, to become indifferent to the pain of the other. The basin before Jesus, he used to wash the disciples' feet, a sign of care and commitment to service. By rediscovering the waters of baptism in the waters of the footbath, all the missionary disciples, the whole Church, prepared to serve those in need of their generous action, wrapped in tenderness, always supported by merciful justice. We cannot say that we love God if we do not see the other who suffers. (*1 John 4: 19-20*).

A COMMITMENT FOR LIFE

Love of people favors the encounter of fullness with God. Closing our eyes before our fellow makes us blind before God as well. For this reason, the missionary only announces the good news of doing good to others, wishing everyone's happiness: there is more happiness in giving than in receiving (*Acts of the Apostles 20, 35*).

QUESTIONS TO WORK IN GROUP

1. What does the text tell me today? Are my feelings like those of the Samaritan? Or am I often like the priest and the Levite?
2. Have you ever experienced being the one who reaches out to someone who needs help? When you help someone, do you do it for the love of God and with the love of God?
3. Like YAR, how is perspective from the Word?

SOCIAL COMMITMENT

Get out of the comfort zone and go to meet the other, whoever he is, to be able to perceive all his problems and all his needs, let himself be carried away by the feeling of compassion and, full of mercy, do everything he can to make life be better for everyone.

Organize with the YAR community visits to the homeless people, foster homes, nursing homes.

FINAL PRAYER

Merciful and compassionate Father, who rule the world with justice and love, give us a wise heart to recognize the presence of your Kingdom among us. In his great Mercy, Jesus, the beloved Son, who lived among us, witnessed your infinite love and announced the Gospel of the brotherhood of peace.

May His example teach us to welcome the poor and marginalized, our brothers and sisters, and to be builders of a humane and caring society. May the Divine Spirit ignite in our Church, sincere charity and brotherly love; honesty and law shine in our society and let us be true citizens of new heaven and earth. Amen.



TESTIMONY OF A RAY YOUNGSTER

My name is Adrine Dias, I am 24 years old, I am Brazilian and I have been a member of the Jerusalem pre-community (RAY CASTELO) for 5 years. I met the group through the youth of my parish, “Nuestra Señora de la Peña”, and I can say that it was at that moment that God rewrote my story.

From that moment I was sure that God had planned the best for me, that the RAY was my place. Since I was very young, I looked for the things that the world offered me, illusions, momentary happiness, but inside my heart I felt that this was not my place and I felt that God told me to return to the place that I should never have left, it was there that I decided to go back to the group.

Time passed and I began to realize everything that God told me, that RAY was the meeting place between him and me.

I am very grateful for everything I have experienced so far, for being my second home, my refuge, my daily care. I thank God for the opportunity and honor of being part of this movement of love to which I have great affection.

THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF RAY

a) Praying: The young people develop a process of ongoing conversion, by which, leaving behind dispersion and exteriority, they enter within themselves to encounter the God of life who is waiting for them.

b) Communitarian: They relive the experience of the original Christian community in Jerusalem, living the study of the Word, fidelity to the Breaking of the Bread, solidarity with the needy, and intimate communion among the members in true friendship and fraternity, in complete harmony and cooperation with the pastors of the Church.

c) Missionary: They strive for total availability to service of the Church, actively cooperating with the missions and other ministries of the entire Augustinian Recollect family, imitating the apostolic spirit of Saint Ezekiel and the heroism of Saint Magdalene of Nagasaki and the other saints of the Order.

d) Marian: They begin by placing themselves under the care of Mary, our Mother of Consolation, and they entrust to her their activities and their very lives. Knowledge and love of Mary help the young people to understand better and live with greater love the mystery of Christ and of his Church.

e) Augustinian: They search for and proclaim God and his kingdom and strive to make real the union of minds and hearts in God proposed by Saint Augustine, following the examples of our saints and religious, models for the entire Augustinian Recollect family, whom they enrich with their youth and their dynamism.

