

25 JAR

ANNIVERSARY

Recollects Augustinian Youth



agustinos
recoletos

CATECHESIS 8

RAY YOUNGSTERS PROPHETS OF THE KINGDOM

CATECHESIS 8

Civilization of love

BEGINNING PRAYER

Lord and my God, my only hope, do not allow me to stop looking for you due to tiredness, but to always look for you with renewed enthusiasm.

You, who made me find you and instilled in me that desire to immerse myself more and more in you, give me strength to continue in it.

See that before you are my strengths and my weakness. Keep those, cure this. See that before you are my knowledge and my ignorance. Wherever you closed me, open me when I call.

Make me remember you, understand you, love you.

Increase these gifts in me, until I completely transform into a new creature.

Saint Augustine, The Trinities, 15 (L. Lopez)

BIBLICAL ENLIGHTENMENT (John 13, 34-35)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

AGUSTINIAN ENLIGHTENMENT (Saint Augustine Trate 65, 2)

Therefore, my brothers, do not suppose that with what the Lord asserts: I give you a new command: That you love each other, the greatest mandate has been overlooked, the one with which it is prescribed with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the whole mind we love the Lord, our God. Indeed: “That you love each other seems to be said as overlooked, as if this had nothing to do with the other that is said: You will love your neighbor as you love yourself. It states, in effect: The entire Law and the Prophets are based on these two precepts. But, according to those who understand well, one and the other are found in each one, because whoever loves God cannot despise the one who prescribes that he loves his neighbor, and whoever loves his neighbor holy and spiritually, what does he want in him but God?”

That same is the different benevolence of all human benevolence, distinguishing to which, the Lord has added: As I loved you. Indeed, what did he want in us but God? Not because of what we had, but for what we would have, so that, as I have just said before, it may lead us to where God is all in all. No wonder it is also said that the doctor wants the sick; and what does he want in them but the health that he wants to bring back, or the disease to drive out for which he comes? Let us therefore also love each other, so that, as far as we can, by caring for choice we draw each other to have God within us. That same benevolence gives us this one who asserts: As I loved you, that you also love each other. He loved us, then, for this, so that we love each other, by conferring this on us, loving us: that mutual benevolence binds us together and, united together by such a sweet bond the members, may we be the body of such an important head.

MAGISTERIAL ENLIGHTENMENT (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, nn. 580)

Building the “civilization of love”

The immediate purpose of the Church’s social doctrine is to propose the principles and values that can sustain a society worthy of the human person. Among these principles, solidarity includes all the others in a certain way. It represents “one of the fundamental principles of the Christian view of social and political organization”[1217].

Light is shed on this principle by the primacy of love, “the distinguishing mark of Christ’s disciples (cf. Jn 13:35)”[1218]. Jesus teaches us that “the fundamental law of human perfection, and consequently of the transformation of the world, is the new commandment of love” (cf. Mt 22:40, Jn 15:12; Col 3:14; Jas 2:8)[1219]. Personal behaviour is fully human when it is born of love, manifests love and is ordered to love. This truth also applies in the social sphere; Christians must be deeply convinced witnesses of this, and they are to show by their lives how love is the only force (cf. 1 Cor 12:31-14:1) that can lead to personal and social perfection, allowing society to make progress towards the good.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOPIC

“The civilization of love will prevail in the turmoil of relentless social struggles, and will give the world the dream transfiguration of ultimately Christian humanity” Paul VI Christmas Homily of 1975.

We understand youth ministry as “the organized action of the Church to accompany young people to discover, follow and commit to Jesus Christ and his message so that, transformed into new men, and integrating their faith and life, they become protagonists of the construction of the Civilization of Love” (CATE)

“The Church makes a strong call to young people to seek and find in it the place of communion with all men and women, in order to build the Civilization of Love and build peace in justice.” (DP 1188)

The Church is by its nature missionary, it is open to mission and, consequently, the Christian is a man on mission, sent into the world to announce the good news of Jesus. The Youth Mission in the message of the council is: “Build a world better than that of the elderly”

Thus, our frame of reference to fulfill the entrusted mission is Jesus himself, the model par excellence of the human being. Mission is always the fruit and sign of love, in the Gospels we see how Jesus lives his love for the Father and his love for men. Loves that drive him to a life of dedication, an existence on mission, a constant attitude of departure and self-forgetfulness.

Jesus lives pending the will and love of the Father whom he loves and therefore whom he wishes to obey, respond in fidelity, and please.

The point of reference in acting and speaking about Jesus is not himself but the Father, whom he loves, “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. (Jn 4,34).

From this love arises love for men, their brothers, the beloved children of the Father, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.” (Jn 15,9).

Love for the Father makes Jesus his presence, his icon in the midst of the world and this configuration with the Father pushes him to love others, to give himself to them.

We young people in search of discovering the meaning of life and values and after a long journey within Youth Ministry, we recognize that the meaning of life is love. “The human being, the only earthly creature whom God has loved for himself, cannot find his own fulfillment, if it is not in the sincere dedication of himself to others.” (GS 24) And this is why we want all young people, like us, to discover the true meaning of life, love, “God is love” and it manifests itself through the construction of the Civilization of Love.

The invitation made to us in this stage of conversion is to live the Civilization of Love from the everyday. We are in the world to love and experience the love of God. Jesus lived the situation of his time and identified with the pain of all to lead them to participate in the divine life and be part of his Kingdom. As we are told in Deus Caritas est: “According to the model set forth in the parable of the Good Samaritan, Christian charity is above all and simply the response to an immediate need in a given situation: the hungry must be satisfied, the naked clothed, the sick treated to recover, the prisoners visited, etc “ (DCE n° 31)

This is precisely what we are called to do: we have to convert from the everyday, from the reality in which we find ourselves. Using the same language of young people. Highlighting the values of the Civilization of Love, truth, justice, peace, freedom, happiness, ecology. Always remembering that we should not seek anything in our mission other than to be bridges. Bridges between God and men and between men among themselves. Bridges of reconciliation, brotherhood, love and peace. So that the will of God is carried out and thus the kingdom of God becomes present.

In the face of the current culture of death, our responsibility as Christians is expressed in the commitment to the *new evangelization*, the most important fruits of which must be the civilization of love.

“The Gospel, and consequently evangelization, are certainly not identified with culture and are independent with respect to all cultures” (*Evangelii nuntiandi*, 20); However, they have a regenerative force that can positively influence cultures. The Christian message does not harm them by destroying their peculiar characteristics; on the contrary, he acts in them from within, valuing the original potentialities that his genius is capable of expressing. The influence of the Gospel on cultures purifies and elevates the human, making the beauty of life shine, the harmony of peaceful coexistence, the genius that every people brings to the community of men. This influence has its strength in love, which does not impose but proposes, based on free adherence, in a climate of respect and reciprocal welcome.

The Church is aware that this doctrine can remain a dead letter if social life is not animated by the spirit of an authentic religious experience and especially by Christian witness nourished incessantly by the creative and healing action of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, he is aware that the crisis in society and in contemporary man is largely motivated by the reduction of the specific spiritual dimension of the human person. Christianity contributes to the construction of a society tailored to man precisely by infusing him with a soul and proclaiming the demands of God’s law, on which all the organizations and laws of society must be founded, if they want to guarantee human advancement, liberation from all kinds of slavery and true progress.

This contribution of the Church takes place above all through the witness that Christians, and especially laity, bear in their ordinary life. Today’s man accepts the message of love more from witnesses than from teachers, and from these when they present themselves as authentic witnesses (see *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 41). This is the challenge we have to face, so that new spaces are opened for the future of Christianity and even humanity.

QUESTIONS TO WORK IN GROUP

1. What is the civilization of love? How does it look like? How can it be visible?
2. How are culture and evangelism related?
3. In what ways does the “civilization of love” manifest itself in our pastoral care?
4. Personally, am I a young man who works for the construction of the civilization of love? In what specific acts?

SOCIAL COMMITMENT

In the community

Think and list areas of our parish community that need our youth impulse. Select a specific need and think of small acts in which we can act responding to it as builders of the civilization of love.

Personally

In the next week, call a person who you think needs to remember how much God loves us, talk “personally” with him / her. Listen to him, ask him about his well-being! Bridged between God and him.

FINAL PRAYER*Civilization of love creed*

We believe that our God has called us to live to build his Kingdom.

We believe that all the inhabitants of this land have the right to live with dignity, justice, peace and freedom.

We believe that all the crucified Christs will rise resurrected and glorious for the solidarity between our peoples.

We believe that we can live in communion without violence, without wars and without oppression.

We believe that the poor, the indigenous, the children and the sad are preferentially loved by the Father, and that is why we declare ourselves his brothers.

We believe that each family in our land needs to live in fidelity and tenderness.

We believe that young Americans cannot passively live their hours and days, but must be the first citizens of this new Civilization.

We believe that making a great country is possible among us,

so that our borders are not walls that divide us, but lines of fraternal encounter.

We believe that the spirit of God animates the Holy Church, that as a great People of liberation pilgrims.

We believe that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has lovingly protected us throughout our history. She urges us to share bread with the hungry, and raise the humble from the dust.

We ardently believe in a new heaven and a new earth.

And we ask insistently that the Civilization of Love be soon a reality among us.

Amen.

TESTIMONY OF A YOUNG RAY*What is RAY?*

Hi! I am Azul Mussi Favre, I am 20 years old and I belong to the RAY of Santa Fe, Argentina. I have been in the RAY since I was 13 years old. From that moment I walk with my brothers in the community, called Mother Antonia of Jesús. Also since last year I have led a caravan of adolescents called Mother of Good Advice, with 4 other brothers.



I understand that being RAY is above all living life in community. Walking knowing that you will always have brothers by your side to get up every time you fall, but also to share all the joys. Community that makes you grow in faith, that allows you to feel Jesus close all the time. Community full of the greatest and purest love, because we know that we are there because God wanted it to be so, it was He who crossed our paths once and is the one who does not allow them to separate.

Being RAY is knowing that our best guide will always be the Holy Spirit. Know that it is that Spirit that makes us be a community. It is that same Spirit that fills our hearts with love, that allows us to see a brother in the other, but also, who teaches us how to treat each other, how to correct each other every time we make mistakes.

I think being RAY is accepting Maria as a mother. Mother who takes care of us, who protects us, who covers us with her mantle and who walks by our side to reach Jesus faster. Accept her as the best example of dedication and love, and ask her to help us to be more and more like her.

And finally, I believe that being RAY, but above all being Christians, is being willing to build THE CIVILIZATION OF LOVE. Who we are with and where we touch. We are called to be that light in the world for all those who need us. And we can only do this if, first, we allow ourselves to be transformed by the love of Jesus, in order to continue transforming hearts in His name.

ORGANIZATION OF THE RAY (II)

f) Local Council: It is established in each RAY center with the same structure as that of the National Council. Members of the local council are elected by the local assembly for a period of three years.

g) Coordinator: He is in-charge of the operation of the RAY center.⁹ He ought to safeguard the climate of fraternity among the members and to assure that the objectives and end of the movement are realized. He also presides the Council.

h) Secretary: He has the task of preparing the minutes of the meeting of the Assembly, of the National or Local Council and of the permanent commission.

i) Treasurer: He is in-charge of the economic affairs. He takes care of the book of accounts and collects the contributions of the members. At the end of the year, he will present to the Council the statement of account of the year and the budget of the following year.

j) Board members: They coordinate the different areas of activity of each of the RAY center. The four areas enumerated below are basic, but if in some centers, it is deemed necessary to create other areas, it can be done, but taking always into account the fact that excessive number of members in the Council is detrimental to its operation.

- **Spirituality and Liturgy:** He takes charge of the prayers and liturgical celebrations, especially the weekly Eucharist and penitential celebrations.

- **Formation:** He oversees the formation aspects both in the preparation of the themes of the Itinerary and in the formation of animators.
- **Communication:** He coordinates in the exchange of information among the centers, he sends the calendar of activities to the National Council, and sends a report on the major activities to the office of communication of the Order as well as to some social networks.
- **Apostolate:** He spearheads solidarity activities and collaboration established with each of the departments.

