

(English translation)

Rocca di Papa, 29 December 1974

Nourishing ourselves on the Word of God

Chiara to the Gen

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In this very important moment I would like an angel to take my place in order to tell you what the Word of God is. I am sure that you couldn't even imagine it. One day I had the adventure of discovering it and later on St. Augustine confirmed it. When Jesus says: "The words that you (Father) have given to me, I have given to them," Augustine comments: "Everything the Father has given to the Son, He has given it in generating Him.... In what other way would He give some words to his Son, since, in the Word, God said everything in an ineffable way?" The Word of God, therefore, every Word of God, is a presence of the Word, that is, of God Himself.

Imagine then the attitude that each one of us is called to have toward it. First of all, the Word of God is to be known and loved. For this reason we take into consideration one of these words at a time and we try to find its real meaning.

Then, it must be lived.

Here is the point. The Word of God doesn't have any effect in us unless we live it. But if we live it, it works miracles. In fact, it changes our way of thinking, of willing, of acting, in all circumstances of life. Therefore, when we live the Word, it is no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us. And this is already a revolution.

Furthermore, since an individualized Christianity is inconceivable for us, we must communicate the experiences of the Word. We don't just want the perfection, the sanctification, the fulfilment of the individual, but that of the whole community. In this communion both the one who listens and the one who speaks derive a great benefit, because it is only in giving that we really possess.

The Word of God must be lived. The Fathers of the Church have repeated this in every possible way. In fact, the preaching of the Word without its witness, without life, was a scandal to the first-century pagans, as it still is to non-Christians today. It provokes criticism towards our religion as then it brought people to curse rather than to convert. Jesus says that we must first act and then teach.

The Word of God must be lived moment by moment: every moment. "Let our mind," says Ambrose, "remain always with Him... let it never be separated from His word!" There must be no room in our spiritual life for anything other than the Word of God. This means constant communication with the Word.

There is a very powerful fact, however, that brings us to love the Word of God passionately and to put it on as our clothing or our shield. This fact has been forgotten, but we Gen must make it shine forth again in all its beauty.

Do you know, Gen, what importance the Word of God had for the early Christians? They often considered it to have the same importance as the Eucharist. The early Christians nourished themselves with the Eucharist and the Word with an equal love.

They used to say: "We eat His flesh and drink His blood in the divine Eucharist, but also in the reading of the Scriptures." They also said: "This reading is like eating the Paschal Lamb," and "My refuge is the Gospel which is for me like the flesh of Christ." The wise Origen wrote that the Word which nourishes souls is like another body that the Son of God has taken on.

If this is so, how many times a day will we want to nourish ourselves on the Word? The greatest number of times possible.