

Rimini, May 1, 2000

**Unity without brothers and sisters so as to reach unity with God**

(...)

In the charism, given to us by the Holy Spirit, the word that sums up the whole of the spirituality is “unity”, unity with God and unity with our sisters and brothers; and especially, as our characteristic path, unity with our brothers and sisters so as to reach unity with God. The Holy Spirit, in fact, gave us a way to unite ourselves with God that is fully according to the gospel. We seek him and find him through our neighbour, by loving our neighbour. This is the only thing that guarantees our union with God; only in this way can we discover him alive and present in our heart when we recollect ourselves with him. And this is an experience we all have, even the children, and from the start. We love our neighbours one at a time, during the day, we try to be one with them and in the evening we find union with God in our hearts.

A writing that is really a prayer written some years ago bears witness to this:

“When unity with our brothers and sisters is complete, when it has flowered anew and more fully from difficulties, then, as night fades into day, tears into light, often, I find you, Lord; you invite me, you draw me, gently but firmly, into your presence. Then you alone reign within me and outside me. My soul is immersed as if in some delicious nectar and my heart seems to have become the chalice that contains it. My soul is filled with a silent song known only to you: a melody that reaches you because it comes from you and is made of you.”

For us our brother or sister is, so to speak, the sacrament – almost a sacrament – which brings us to God. Just as in the convents the enclosure, the grille, the veil and silence help union with God, so for us loving our brother or sister is the path to reach him. And the more we love our neighbour the more we deepen union with God. And the more we love our neighbour the more we deepen union with God and the more we love God the more we deepen our union with our neighbour. It is like a little plant: the more its little root goes down into the ground, the better the shoot grows upwards.

It is our experience, then, that the union with God we are aware of like this, can reach the point, with the passage of time, of underlying all we do, and being the background to everything. This pathway, that is our brother or sister, seems to be particularly pleasing to the Lord. Didn't the Holy Father say that our neighbour is the pathway of the Church?

Union with God can then develop with many other graces. These might be emotions, divine impulses given to our will for ever renewed conversions – at our gatherings, for example – or particular consolations or illuminations, like the saints had, St Ignatius at Manresa; illuminations on the Most Holy Trinity, on creation etc.

And all this is a very delicate spiritual deposit, it is the Reign of God within us which we cannot perceive except with the senses of our soul; it is a deposit which, for those who live in the midst of the secularised and materialistic world of our day, is very useful, indeed indispensable – I would say – so as “not to be of this world”, but to live as true and convincing Christians now, in the third millennium.

And lastly, to give prayer its rightful place, in the Movement which is also called the “Work of Mary”, we always have Mary before us, who is the Mother. And how do we imagine her? Just as she is described in Scripture, as she has been painted, sung about, and sculpted by artists of all times. Mary is certainly not someone who is distracted, agitated, hasty, always rushing, focusing only on what is happening outside herself. Instead, she is a person who is fully love for everyone, suffused with mystical beauty, who reveals through her very presence the immense treasure hidden in her heart: God.

With God's grace, we want to be like that too.

(...)

*Chiara Lubich*