 **PRAYER FOR THE VOCATIONS**

**28th November 2015**

**ENTER INTO THE PRAYER!**

1. **Create the atmosphere of contemplation¡**

*Comfort, comfort my people,   
says your God.   
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.* Isaiah *40:1-2*

**Reading and meditation of n°11:****The restlessness of love**

As living icons of the motherhood and of the closeness of the Church, we go out to those who are waiting for the Word of consolation and we bend down with motherly love and fatherly spirit towards the poor and the weak.

The Pope invites us *not to privatise love*, but with the restlessness of the seeker: “Tirelessly seeking the good of the other, of the beloved”.(61)

**In silence I contemplate: W*hen I pose an act of love, what do I really looking for?***

The crisis of meaning of the modern person and the economic and moral crisis of western society and its institutions are not temporary phenomena of the times in which we live but they outline an historical moment of outstanding importance. We are called now, as the Church, to go outside in order to arrive at the margins, geographic, urban and existential – the margins of the mystery of sin, pain, injustice and misery –, to the hidden places of the soul where each person experiences the joys and sufferings of life.(62)

“We live in a culture of conflict, a culture of fragmentation, a culture of waste […]. The discovery of a tramp who has died of cold is not news”. Yet poverty for us is a theological category, “because our God, the Son of God, abased himself, he made himself poor to walk along the road with us. […] A poor Church for the poor begins by reaching out to the flesh of Christ. If we reach out to the flesh of Christ, we begin to understand something, to understand what this poverty, the Lord’s poverty, actually is”.(63) To experience in one’s own life the beatitude of the poor means to be a sign that the anguish of loneliness and limitation has been conquered by the joy of the person who is indeed free in Christ and has learned how to love.

**In silence I contemplate *«Living the beatitudes of the poor means to be a sign where the anguish of loneliness is overcome by the joy of one who is truly free in Christ and has come to love. » In offering myself and being dedicated and effective, am I a sign of which the anguish of loneliness is defeated?”***

During his pastoral visit to Assisi, Pope Francis was asked what the Church must strip away. And he replied: “[Strip away] every action that is not for God, is not of God; strip away the fear of opening the doors and going out to encounter all, especially the poorest of the poor, the needy, the remote, without waiting. Certainly not to get lost in the shipwreck of the world, but to bear with courage the light of Christ, the light of the Gospel, even in the darkness, where one can’t see, where one might stumble. Strip away the seeming assurance structures give, which, though certainly necessary and important, should never obscure the one true strength it carries within: God. He is our strength!”(64)

This resonates like an invitation for us “not to be afraid of the newness the Holy Spirit works within us, not to be afraid of the renewal of structures. The Church is free. She is sustained by the Holy Spirit. It is this that Jesus teaches us in the Gospel: the freedom we need always to find the newness of the Gospel in our life and in structures, the freedom to choose new wineskins for this newness”.(65) We are invited to be audacious, frontier men and women: “Ours is not a ‘lab faith,’ but a ‘journey faith,’ an historical faith. God has revealed himself as history, not as a compendium of abstract truths. […] You cannot bring home the frontier, but you have to live on the border and be audacious.”(66)

**In silence I contemplate: *And if God asked me today to detach /strip myself from any action which is not for him? What are the closed doors in me to find the newness of the Gospel today?***

Besides the challenge of the beatitude of the poor, the Pope invites us to visit the frontiers of thought and culture, to promote dialogue, even at the intellectual level, to give reasons for hope on the basis of ethical and spiritual criteria, questioning ourselves about what is good. Faith never restricts the space for reason, but opens it to a holistic vision of the human person and of reality, and defends it against the danger of reducing the human person to “human material”.(67)

Authentic culture, constantly called to serve humanity in all its conditions, opens unexplored paths, opens doors to allow hope to breathe, strengthens the meaning of life and watches over the common good. An authentic cultural process “promotes an integral humanism and the culture of encounter and relationship: this is the Christian way of promoting the common good, the joy of living. Here, faith and reason unite, the religious dimension and the various aspects of human culture – art, science, labour, literature...”.(68) Authentic cultural research encounters history and opens up ways of seeking the face of God.

The places where knowledge is developed and communicated are also the places where a culture of closeness, of encounter and dialogue can be created that lowers defences, opens doors and builds bridges.(69)

**In silence I contemplate: *What is my attitude in a world plaqued by conflicts? Do I cling to what I call my culture? Or rather, I work to promote a culture of proximity, of encounter and of dialogue? What does the culture of the Gospel brings me?***

1. **Let us pray!**

* ***Let us pray for the various vocation groups in which we work, that we will be able to bring young people and children in the intimate encounter with God***
* ***Let us pray for the young, that amid the turmoil, they are able to perceive the inner light that guides and sends them to the border, to meet God in the brothers and sisters in need.***
* ***Humbly and silently, let us ask for vocations…***