



Meditation 14 January 2014

Remembering with Fr. Kolbe

"Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you. (Lk 1:28).

Mary is a humble maiden of Nazareth, no more than a teen, and yet the Lord looked on her and chose her to be the mother of the Savior.

The Immaculata, as St. Maximilian loved to call her, is "the fruit of God's love that saves the world." Her entire life is a "yes" to this love. Mary listens and responds: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to your word." Mary's 'yes' changed human history.

"Favored one"

The Greek verb is "kecharitomene" and it expresses fundamentally a free love.

The word is passive, therefore, God is the doer of the action. The imperfect is used because the action is not yet completed: Loved freely by God and for always.

God's love is not earned; it is welcomed. Thanks to this welcoming, every ego has the potential to be transformed into a space for others. "And the Word became flesh." (Jn 1:14)

One word from Mary made the impossible, possible - God becomes man. Man becomes what he welcomes. Mary welcomed God and became the dwelling place of God. If we welcome God, fount of peace and joy, we will give peace and joy.

"Highly favored one"

Today, God looks with love upon every man and woman. He renews this "project of love" every time that we give our "yes." Still, our existence is weighed down by miseries, and we can find ourselves in an Auschwitz where we ask "Where are you, God?" The response comes to us through the mouth of St. John of the cross: "Lord, my God, you do not distance yourself from this who do not distance themselves from you."

January 27, 1945 the world discovered Auschwitz, place of death, symbol of extermination, the destruction of a people.

We cannot and must not forget the sacrifice of the victims. So that humanity no longer lives those events we seek to understand the profound significance of the memorial that is honored every year on January 27th. We turn to our authoritative guide, Fr. Kolbe, and prepare to listen. He speaks to us of the past, but could be speaking today of the augmenting violence.

More than yesterday? Yes, because evil knows how to find always more sophisticated and unthinkable ways to decadent the human heart against what God is saying to each one: I have loved you with an eternal love.

Always? Then why are we not free from evil? Why does he leave us alone? Father Kolbe removes this doubt when we "go with him" to Auschwitz, where

He reminds us of God's unique and eternal love for each one of us: We are in block 11. In the underground cell... the bunker of starvation. Fr. Kolbe is here, with nine others. Locked in. A prisoner asks, "Why?"

With suffering mixed with serenity, Father Kolbe responds: **"We are not made to understand. We are made to love.** Love as Jesus loves. I don't know what else to say. I don't know how to explain this mystery of life and death, of good and evil. I only know that this help can be transformed into a grace if you love yourselves as God loves you. I am only a poor man as well, and so cannot explain, but pray and the light will come."

January 27

Father Kolbe invites us to look to the Immaculata and let ourselves be led by her. With her help, we desire to never forget that we are "not made to understand, but to love." Every morning may we hear the voice of God assuring us: I love you. I love you.... Peace will take its dwelling within and among us.

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