



14 September 2014

Father Kolbe, the man of the Nunc Dimittis

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory for your people Israel.” (Lk 2, 29-32)

“Now, Master, you may let...”

Simeon’s song at the evening of his life, which the liturgy has us pray every evening, is the song of one who feels free from an internal weight that had become unbearable.

“Now, Master, you may let...”

Finally, Lord, “I have seen your salvation.” Now that I have seen you, I am no longer afraid to die. I am no longer afraid of this unrest that burned inside of me, of this night that I didn’t want to go through. I am no longer afraid because my eyes have seen you, Jesus. You are there, you are with me. “You are light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.” Simeon helps us to be ready to leave that which is asked of us in various moments of life, and helps us to live the detachment from persons, from things with great serenity of soul.

Father Kolbe

“Before any work,” says a friar of Niepokalanów, “he thought out the means, ways and method of action, then entrusted the work to Providence, through the Immaculata. When I asked him, ‘what would happen to your work, Father, if you would not be present?’ He calmly answered: ‘It’s the work of the Immaculata. She will provide.’”

At the peak of his apostolic and missionary activity he announces to his friars that, even if all was destroyed, love would always remain. Father Kolbe, the man of the big editorial projects, reasons in mass-media terminology. He dreams of evangelizing the world and ends his days at Auschwitz in the starvation bunker. He offers himself spontaneously to save a father.

His martyrdom made him a credible witness to the civilization of love, because he believed that life is received when life is given.

For the men and women of the “nunc dimittis,” God is more important than the task entrusted to them. What matters is that the work of God goes ahead with them or without them. Detachment is difficult, it’s difficult to put ourselves aside. We must fix our gaze on the Absolute to be able to say with Saint Teresa of Avila: “Only God suffices.” We can’t do it alone. Like Simeon we must go to the temple and “hold Jesus, found in the arms of Mary, his mother.” (Lk 2: 28)

Angela Esposito
for the community