

(English translation)

Rocca di Papa, 9 March 1989

"ABBA, FATHER!"

Dearest all,

...

Jesus was praying. He was praying to His Father. For Him, the Father was "Abba" and that is "Daddy", His "Dad", to whom Jesus spoke with words of infinite trust and boundless love. He prayed to the Father from within the Trinity where He is the second divine person.

It was precisely because of this special prayer that He revealed to the world who He really was: the Son of God.

But since He came on earth for us, the fact that only He could pray in this privileged way wasn't enough for Him. When He died for us and redeemed us, He made us children of God, His brothers and sisters. Through the Holy Spirit He also gave us the possibility of being taken into the heart of the Trinity, in Him, together with Him, through Him. So we too can make the divine invocation "Abba, Father!" (*Mk* 14.36 and *Rm* 8:15) - "Daddy", "my Dad", "our Dad" with all that this entails. We are certain of His protection, we feel secure, we are able to abandon ourselves blindly to His love, we have divine consolations, strength and ardour - an ardour that is born in the heart of those who are certain that they are loved...

This is Christian prayer, an extraordinary prayer. It cannot be found anywhere else, nor in any other religion. At the most, if people believe in a divine being that can be venerated, adored and beseeched, they do this from outside the divine being, so to speak. For us it is different: we enter into the heart of God.

And so?

Let's remind ourselves, first and foremost, of the dizzy heights to which we are called as children of God, and, as a consequence of this, of the exceptional possibility we have of praying.

Naturally, we can say "Abba, Father", with all the depth of meaning of this word only if it is the Holy Spirit who pronounces this word in us.

For this to happen, we have to be Jesus, nothing other than Jesus.

How? We know. He is already living in us through grace but we have to do our part. This means to love, to be in an attitude of love towards God and our neighbour. The Holy Spirit will put this word on our lips with a greater fullness if we are in perfect unity with our brothers and sisters wherever Jesus is among us.

Let's make "Abba, Father" our prayer.... In this way, we will fully correspond to our calling to believe in love, our calling to have faith in the love which lies at the root of our charism.

Yes, love. The Father loves us. He is our father: what should we fear?

In the plan of love which He has for each one of us, a plan which opens up for us day by day, we cannot fail to see the most extraordinary adventure to which we could be called.

"Abba" is the most characteristic prayer of the Christian and, in a special way, of us in the Focolare Movement. So, if we are sure that we are living our Ideal, that is, if we are living love, let's speak to the Father in the same way as Jesus did.

What will the effects be? We will experience them in our hearts .