

Rocca di Papa, March 23, 1989

"Come Lord Jesus!"¹

Dear Everyone,

Today is Holy Thursday, a very special day for us. It reminds us of various divine realities that lie at the heart of our spirituality, so much so that when this day comes each year, it exerts a certain fascination on us and it is not unusual for a sense of Paradise to invade our soul.

Moreover, how can we not feel our hearts fill with joy on Holy Thursday, a day which emphasizes the new commandment of Jesus, unity, his testament, his extraordinary gift of the Eucharist, and the priesthood that makes it possible to have the Eucharist?

Today let us pause, therefore, to consider with immense gratitude these extraordinary mysteries which are so fundamental for all Christians and for us in particular.

Tomorrow is Good Friday, another day that brings us to the heart of Christianity and of our spirituality: Jesus dies, he dies forsaken.

Wouldn't this be the right moment to address, in some way, an issue that no one, or at least very few people, want to think about today, in a world full of consumerism and various evils - that is, the subject of our own death?

We should do so in order to be in tune with our Ideal that teaches us how to face every moment of our life, including our passing to the next life, to eternal life.

Let's consider this theme while remaining in the realm of prayer, the topic we have chosen for these last few weeks.

There is a very short prayer that we can say, and this too, is an amazing one.

It is a prayer that the Holy Spirit gave the Church, who says it to her Spouse, Jesus.

It is found at the end of the Book of Revelation, the last book of our Bible. The words are: "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).

"Come, Lord Jesus!"

We could make this prayer our own as we think about death, as we await and prepare for it.

Yes, because we have, or ought to have, our own precise concept of death: it is not the end, but the beginning; it is the meeting with Jesus. Furthermore, it is not optional. It is part of everyone's life. The day of our death will come for all of us - it is the will of God for everyone.

Yes, it is the will of God for me, for us, for everyone.

We must know how to welcome it when it comes, as the will of God for us.

However, in general, how do we accept the will of God?

We have understood that the will of God, whatever it may be, is an expression of God's love for us.

It is not logical or right to accept it only by resigning ourselves to it. We must see it as the best thing that could happen to us. That is why we make the effort to live so that the will of God becomes our own.

We commit ourselves to living it not only with all our love, but with enthusiasm, because we know that by doing the will of God we have started out on a divine adventure, in part known to us and

1 C.LUBICH, Cercando le cose di lassù, [Seeking the things that are above] Rome 1992, p. 134-136.

in part to be discovered. We know that in this way we fulfill the plan God has for each of us.

In fact, we can tell someone is a focolarino by this way of doing the will of God, because it is on this very point that our conversion came about, thus changing the course of our lives.

However, if we see every will of God in this light, we should also see death in the same way.

Over and above the illnesses and the physical and spiritual sufferings that can accompany it, death is a gift, a new gift to accept with gratitude, the last gift we will receive before heaven.

For this reason, we shouldn't live as though it doesn't exist. Rather, we should include it in our plans, prepare more and more to welcome it with joy and await it with ardent desire - as the saints did - helping ourselves with the prayer "Come, Lord Jesus!"

"Come, Lord Jesus!"

When we think about death, we can say: "Come, Lord Jesus!" By inviting him to come in this way, with all our hearts, many fears will disappear. Everything will become clear. Jesus will come, in his own time. He himself will come.

Moreover, this prayer is good on other occasions as well.

We can say "Come, Lord Jesus!" while waiting for Holy Communion.

We can say it before meeting with an individual or a group of people in whom we absolutely want to love him. And we can say it before doing anything else that is his will.

"Come, Lord Jesus!" Looking at you, we will love (which is our vocation) without fear.

As we await your coming, we will live this life well, and as soon as the next life opens up to us, we will plunge ourselves into its never-ending adventure.

You have conquered death. Through this prayer, we sense that from now on, you have conquered death in us and in our hearts.

Therefore 'Come, Lord Jesus'... come always, in all of us.

Death will be no more; there will only be you, the Risen Lord. And that is already Easter."

Wishing all of you a glorious and continuous Easter, one that is fruitful, very fruitful for us, for the Church and for the world.

Chiara Lubich