

(English translation)

Rocca di Papa, January 25, 1975

## The social revolution

**Mario:** When I, who had been very passionate about social justice, and who wanted to bring about a “revolution”, met the Ideal, I saw the concrete possibility of doing so – of getting to the root of things. Now, sometimes when I meet people I have the desire to speak to them about this world that we are trying to bring about. How did you see it in 1949?

**Chiara:** The social revolution.

(Applause)

Listen, only yesterday I was thinking to myself that the Gospel is not truly understood, it's not understood. Because if the Gospel were truly understood, we wouldn't need anything else. Even to bring about a social revolution, we wouldn't need anything else.

There's a phrase in the Gospel that says: “Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given to you as well (Mt 6:33), (so if we could only manage...). Or again: “Anyone who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake (and all of us have to leave them, not concretely, but spiritually, so that we can have God in the first place) and for the sake of the Gospel will be repaid a hundred times over... in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life” (Mk 10: 29-30). Or take yet another: “Whatever you ask for in my name, I will do” (Jn 14:13). And then another: “If you have faith, everything you ask for in prayer you will receive” (Mt 21:22). These four phrases would be enough to resolve all the social problems.

You might ask: “But Chiara, what's that got to do with this?” It is relevant, because when Jesus said: “Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given to you as well,” the “other things” he was talking about were bread, a house to live in, food to eat, clothes to wear, a good family: all of this was to be given to those who seek his kingdom.

And when he speaks about the hundredfold he intends a hundredfold of fathers, a hundredfold of houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, etc. Then he goes on and says: “Ask, and it will be given to you” (Mt 7:7). He is a God who can give you everything.

The fact is this: we look at the Gospel in its spiritual dimension. But the Gospel has, in I don't know how many phrases, in almost all of them a human dimension, because Jesus is the Man-God. It's what Foco says: there is Our Father, but there is also our bread. So much so that in the Our Father we are asked to pray for bread, and this means praying for concrete things.

Now, I understand that it's possible to deduce a Christian social doctrine, that we can study economic systems, and so on, but who has had the courage to start a revolution based on the words of God? Nobody, in my opinion.

Do you know why nobody has done it? Because these words haven't been understood yet.

We are still in a learning phrase; we are still re-evangelizing ourselves. We are just starting to have the experience that when we ask, we obtain, that when we seek the kingdom of God the rest is given to us. But when we experience this in full it will be in such a way that it will be truly our own life, God incarnate. We will be able to sow this in the midst of those who are developing, and together with the “bread” we bring (because we have to begin in this way, it's the Gospel, giving food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, this is all Gospel)... together with the bread and clothes, and our visits to the imprisoned, we will be able to bring the Gospel, the genuine evangelical message. In this way we will sow the genuine, the strongest, most powerful social revolution.

I feel that I am very alone in saying all of these things, because I am convinced of them with a conviction that you cannot imagine.

I spoke of this the other day with the gen, and I felt that they took a leap forward all of a sudden. I found out that... I don't know if you heard the answer that I gave them, the question was more or less like yours... they set out without further delay. With my enthusiasm to touch these young people, I say that these young people are just waiting to go out and be deceived. Because they usually go with the communists and get taken in or with the liberals and get taken in there. Either way they end up empty-handed and disappointed. So I said: "Come with me, with my party"

(Applause)

And I discovered that somebody else, I don't remember who, but an important personality, also speaks of Jesus' party... but party is an ugly word because it means taking sides.... Anyway, if we were to place this [the Gospel] as our base and then go to the *mocambos* there in Tondo, in the Philippines, or to the *favelas* in Argentina, and after bringing bread to the people, schools, etc., we give the Gospel as it is, with all of its consequences.... Try to read the Gospel some time, and the promises that the Gospel offers us; try to read it, you'll be amazed and you'll exclaim: "It would be enough to do this, all the rest is unnecessary."

Of course, it couldn't have been otherwise, Jesus is God, he became man. He came on earth; do you think he didn't intend to resolve the social problems? He didn't just come to save our souls and to bring us into paradise. He also came to take away our hunger. Indeed he spent half of his time healing the sick, curing everyone, even raising the dead; so his life was his own, human and divine life together, one life – but human and divine together.

This is why I said that I feel alone in saying these things, now that I have begun to understand them from within. Hearing about the social revolution in South America which then failed.... I've seen so many failures! These young people who set about doing all they can in South America, or even adults, write to me. They can't manage to resolve anything, because they either start off with this group or with that other one. Then there are controversies, rancor and everything else. But if we understood Jesus, that which Jesus is, we would have sorted everything out.

But, you see, we are alone, we are small.... Yet we have a treasure that one of these days will explode, I'm convinced. It was Our Lady who gave me this conviction with her *Magnificat*, which says: "He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away" (Lk 1: 52-53). This then is the social revolution: fill the hungry with many goods and send the rich away empty-handed, without armed revolution, without shooting them; it's enough to send them away empty-handed.

(Applause)

And these phrases of the *Magnificat* are from the Gospel... it's all Gospel! We have to become passionate about the Gospel. But there's such an allergy in the world for everything that has to do with religion... and now there's a kind of double-attitude with regard to all of this, especially in the young people. On the one hand you have this allergy, no religion, everything taboo, taboo, taboo; and on the other hand you have those young people who are waking up to Jesus, and who see him as at least a hero. Maybe they don't see him as God, maybe they see him as just a man, a superstar, but at least they are attracted to him.

We should have the answer. And if we don't find it in our concrete life experiences – but of course you do – one small experience would be enough to convince us of the truth of many others (because if only once the promise has been fulfilled it means that every time we ask for something with those conditions it will be fulfilled).

We have to have the firm desire in our hearts that this evangelical revolution comes about, so that we can explain the social revolution with the Gospel at the base. But what we need here is... it will all

come out together, many saints will come out... because we need people who are “living Gospels” – God incarnate. Many sociologists will come out of all of this, but sociology presupposes a philosophy, and a theology. But the Gospel contains everything, everything. Because he came, and he had a mind that was also a human mind. There were the two natures, the human and the divine; but do you really think that Jesus didn't have a philosophy, that he didn't have his own theology? The mind of the son of God! He had the highest philosophy and the highest theology!

(...) So let's start. Will we have all the courage we need?

I, as small as I am, as small-minded as I am, feel courage, because someone puts it inside me. But if you were with me I'd have even more courage!

(Applause)