



Apostles for Today

Reflections and prayers - January 2010

God the Infinite Love of St. Vincent Pallotti

4th meditation

How the Angels in the second Hierarchy minister to our souls

God shares his love

“With the eternal and infinite love with which God loves himself, God mercifully feeds me, and makes the love of God live in me, stay in me, operate in me, so that it is not I who love God in me, but God eternally and infinitely loves himself in me, the abyss of profane and earthly love.” (Pallottine Community Prayers p. 252, OOCC X, 453)

Reflection: How the angels in the second hierarchy minister to our souls.

The angels bring us into communication with God. In this fourth meditation St. Vincent wishes us to discover a God who communicates, a Father who with infinite love is looking for ways to help us understand, live and enjoy his graces, favours, gifts and supernatural illuminations, and so rejoice in his kingdom of love. He speaks to us of knowing the gifts and graces that bring us closer to the kingdom. He tells us that God grants us all the graces necessary in order that ‘the most pure love of God’ alone may guide, regulate and animate our thoughts, words and deeds.

The person is, by very nature, a social being. A person who lives totally isolated from others would be diminished as a person. In order to grow, fulfil oneself, to be oneself, it is necessary to be in communication with other persons.

We live in the era of communications. Today it is possible to receive news from the furthest reaches of the world a few seconds after something has happened. A telephone, a computer puts us in contact with the culture of far away countries. We may be led to believe that this is the era of the best communication between persons.

In order to communicate we have created diverse forms of language, gestures, the spoken word, the written form, telephone, the Internet etc. Today we can all communicate with all others. Even in the most difficult circumstances communication between persons is possible in practically every moment.

Words are the principal means at our disposal to satisfy our need to communicate. Dialogue helps to know the joys and the sufferings of others. Through the spoken word what is most intimate in life is revealed. We know that words allow us to be in harmony with others, however we sometimes do not know what words to use in order to communicate. Experience teaches us that words can raise a person up or make him or her feel desolate and in a desert. Behind every word there is an intention, an intention that marks the relationship with the person with whom we speak. Very often insurmountable barriers that impede a good relationship are raised between people simply because they do not speak.

We live in the era of communication and yet we often feel very much alone. We look around us and see people who often journey together, work close to one another, live in the same buildings, even perhaps share the same house, and despite all this they are alone, isolated one from the other, they do not communicate. At the same time we receive information minute by minute, at every second of life. An infinite number of messages are transmitted visually. Everything around us seeks to communicate with us. We ask ourselves what these messages mean, with what intention have they been transmitted.

We could ask ourselves how is our communication with the persons closest to us?

What are the aspects of our lives, of communication, what words, which of our attitudes distance us from others?

Who are we most in communication with?

How does this communication take place? In order to communicate do we emit signals, are we capable of receiving from others, of listening, of being attentive to their non-verbal messages?

There are so many questions we could ask ourselves in order to better our communication with our families, our friends, the members of the community, with all those who form part of our social circle.

Sometimes I ask myself ‘how would our world, our Church, our groups, both small and large be, if we were to use the means, all the talents, all the virtues, all the gifts that God gave us to simply COMMUNICATE?’

“We give thanks to God who has given us the gift of the word with which we can communicate with Him through his Son, who is His Word.” (Final document of the V General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops, num. 25).

St. Vincent says to us time and again, that:

God communicates himself so that we may know his love.

God communicates himself so that we may know that He is infinite love.

God communicates himself so that we may glimpse the Kingdom of Love which we are called to inhabit.

The Word of God is a poem, a letter written with infinite love by God who wants to communicate to the men and women of all times a truth, a truth he shouts in all languages: ‘I am infinite love and I want you to know this, I love you in a way that only I am capable of’.

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews summarized God’s communication as this: God spoke many times and in many ways to our fathers in the past, through the prophets, and in these recent times he has spoken to us through his Son (cf. Hebrews 1,1-2).

The Word is God’s supreme communication with his beloved children. He does not cease to search for ways and forms to communicate with persons.

What is your relationship with the Word of God?

Do you read the Word often in order to listen to God who speaks to you?

Do you take time to silently be in his presence and listen to his communication with you?

In the first meditation St. Vincent told us of God’s desire to communicate and his own certainty of this:

“God, blessed in himself, moved by his infinite love and mercy, created the world in order to give himself wholly to creatures.” (God, Infinite Love, med. I)

In other writings he affirms:

“My God, you deigned to speak, and you spoke with infinite love, you pronounced omnipotent words ... all infinitely merciful...and with Jesus you have given me everything”. (OOCC X,478-9)

St. Vincent asks to have the gift of the word, one of total communication:

“My God, I want to say a word to you, but do not trust my word, because I have never kept my word, I have always been unfaithful. Yet, my God, this is the word I say to you: ‘I wish to correspond to your infinite love! And (to do so) united with all existing and possible creatures ...’”. (OOCC X 473)

We are close to Christmas, celebrating the start of a new year, we are celebrating God’s communication with people of all races in the feast of the Epiphany, therefore as Christians and members of the Union let us do some investigation:

Do you know the manner in which St. Vincent celebrated the Epiphany in Rome?

Do those who participate in the celebration of Epiphany in Rome still do so in the same manner?

Is the feast of Epiphany celebrated in a special way in your community?

Prayer

“My God, my Father, eternal ruler of the universe, infinite love of my soul, only You can understand Your infinite love and mercy toward my soul. Only You can understand how ungrateful I have been and how I have abused all Your graces, granted to me through Your infinite mercy. Now I trust that through Your infinite mercy, through the infinite merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the merits and intercession of Mary, and of all the angels and saints, You will grant me the gift of always remembering the infinite love and mercy which You have granted me and that You will grant me innumerable graces, and especially the gift of profiting from them until death, according to Your wish.”

(God, the Infinite Love, med. IV)