

(From the Red Book - Pray with Your Heart)

(P. 53 - )

"To the Lord of all hearts"

... When one talks to Mirjana one perceives that there are certain things which are drawing near, but when a visionary or a prophet says, 'it will not be long now', we cannot possibly measure this in terms of days or months as we know them; it is the same as when in the Gospel Jesus Says, "this generation will not be over that everything will come true"; but which generation ? In any case, what we can say is that certain things will happen shortly. This is not for us to fear - this is rather, once again, for all of us, a call to accept the message, to pray and to fast as Our Lady asks.

I can and must say that satan's primary task is to stop us from hearing the Lord's call. I am always appealing to you to pay attention to this fact. Try to discern well what one should wait for and what not to wait for in order to get started.

So, therefore, all these messages, all these events have only one aim - Our Lady wants to take us by the hand and lead us to Jesus, to God. In a message She said, "*To the Lord of all hearts*", so that we may have the peace, the strength for reconciliation, the deepest joy the world cannot give, that we may have faith, that we may truly live.

So many times I hear the question, 'What Our Lady asks for is too much. How is it ? How can we ? We have our work to do, how can we pray the whole Rosary ?' It is certainly a permissible question and I have a general answer to it. 'When we will have discovered the value of prayer, we shall also find the time for it.' For example, he who smokes wastes a little time; where does he get this time from ? You may say that he is used to it, he needs to find some quiet, some peace through his cigarette. You see, we are used to seeing people smoking, but we have yet to discover prayer.

The whole world, all we possess cannot give us what the Lord gives us in prayer. And if so many are tired of this world, if there are many conflicts, many wars, if so many have nothing to eat (there are eight hundred million of them), if there are so many unhappy people with no aim in life, it is only because we do not pray, because we have sent the Lord away. By inviting us to prayer, Our Lady wants us to rediscover the Lord and, with this, the opportunity to carry on living.

The Rosary is an appeal to be together with Our Lady and Jesus in everything. If we have grasped this, then we can take advantage of the Rosary, of the mysteries. By being close to Mary when She says yes to the Lord's will, when She visits others, when Jesus is born, when She presents Him to the Temple, we also learn about this life that Jesus has asked of us. If a mother tells her son, 'You must take two hundred steps and, by so doing, we can spend two hours together' and that son replies, 'My God, who can do two hundred steps a day ?' he has forgotten that his mother invites him to be together. And the same goes for the Rosary. The Rosary is the biblical meditative prayer which takes us step by step, which takes even our heart and soul close to Jesus, to Our Lady. I was speaking yesterday to Marija, together with two priests, and they asked, 'Does it seem a lot to you, that Our Lady should ask for the whole Rosary' Marija replied, 'Not at all, when I see what is happening in the world, I could pray three times the whole Rosary'. Therefore, when we finally discover the value of prayer and when we start believing that prayer can actually help the whole world, then we shall find and have more time for prayer.

Why fasting ? There is a lot to be said about this. I will explain how Our Lady asks us to fast - that it should be based on bread and water. This is the strictest, the ideal form. Obviously, if someone cannot, if one has problems with low blood pressure, then he is allowed some coffee.

If someone is ill, he will find his way. If someone has trouble fasting for two days, then he can start with one. However, this fasting is not an invitation to give up something. Our Lady invites us to live on bread for one day, to discover bread. If you start in this way you will once again discover the Eucharist and you will probably pay attention to the grace of faith; you will be able to pray more easily, you will detach yourselves a little from the material world and you will become freer in your hearts, even more transparent. And that is good for the soul and for the body. Medicine itself advises us to let our stomachs rest for a day.

If you do this, if you start, you will see what fasting means - it is very important. Fasting also helps faith and prayer. We must know that Jesus also fasted and so have all the prophets and saints. We Christians of this world do not want to bother with it.

The Church has established a minimum of two days in a year - Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, but that is the absolute minimum. We, instead, on these two days have dined better than usual by preparing a good fish dish.

Here is a call to rediscover fasting. In fact, the Fathers of the Church have said, ' Fasting is the body's prayer' ; it is prayer, but it also helps us to understand others. If someone feels a little hungry twice a week, he will more easily and more deeply hear the voices of Africa and Asia crying out, ' We have nothing to live on. We have no bread.'

A lot more can be said. Starting with prayer and fasting, we give our hand to Our Lady, and Our Lady will be able to lead us to Jesus.

(Fr. Slavko Barbaric - 7th August 1985)