



MARCH 2012

“... ensure that they bring to perfection the good started”

Invocation to the Holy Spirit

Pope Paul VI

Holy Spirit, give me a great heart open to your silent and strong inspiring word; closed to all mean ambitions; against any human contemptible competition, filled with faithfulness to the holy Church.

Give me a great heart that desires to become like the Heart of Our Lord Jesus;
a great and strong heart to love everyone, serve everyone and suffer for everyone;
a great and strong heart to overcome all trials, tedium, weariness, every disillusionment and offence.

Give me a great and strong heart, constant to the point of sacrifice, when necessary.

A heart whose happiness consists in beating with the Heart of Christ and doing the will of the Father humbly, faithfully and perseveringly.

Amen!

The Word of God

From the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 2:1-8

“If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same

love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but (also) everyone for those of others. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.”

Reflection

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus is the unique, unquestioned and permanent Model of service. A Christian must regard Him as his only Master of life. **There is only one Master. Why?** Others have imitated Christ according to the gift received, according to God’s revealed will, according to His divine project was made known to them. We are not called to do what they did. This is not imitation. We are called to study the way in which they related to Christ, their only Master, because we, too, may relate to Him according to truth. **Christ is the universal model of service and the Master of everyone.** We must look to others as those who imitated the Master, since they teach us that imitation of Christ is possible. They teach us this truth: it is possible to imitate Christ. If it is possible, we must **frequent His school, see Him acting, study His attitudes, keep His commands, penetrate His every action,** asking ourselves why he acted in that way and not in another, allowing ourselves to be helped by the Holy Spirit and draw the conclusions that must become, for us, holy principles for a just way of behaving. **The contemplation of Christ, observing Him, studying Him, meditating on Him, reflecting on Him** become present in those who want

to imitate Him. Christ must be observed, contemplated, frequented, examined, read, studied, listened to, seen, even touched, where possible, so as to remain with Him and **learn the smallest detail of service** that must always be according to God's will in an ever greater perfection of love and truth. This can be done on one condition: that truly **we choose Christ as our only Master** and we deeply desire to frequent His school so as to learn how to serve in God's way. If freedom and conviction are lacking, everything is done with mortifying superficiality which does not help the good functioning of a Christian community. Paul desires that the Philippians may have within themselves the same attitudes that were in Christ Jesus. **Which were these attitudes?** Paul does not let us decide what these attitudes were. He does not want anything earthly to enter into such a delicate situation for our community life and our witness before the world. He explains everything. Unfortunately not everything he said is correctly understood and especially correctly explained, understood in its real and authentic meaning. Since many people have misused Paul's words, it is more than right that in presenting Christ's attitudes and their explanation, one must give great attention and that everything must be said and understood according to the rules of upright faith and authentic doctrine, which is the heritage of the universal Church and cannot be subject to the judgement of this or that person even if they are of good intention. Truth is one thing but good intentions are something else. Good intentions do not count when the truth is falsified. In this case, either it is ignorance and must be removed, or it is a wrong conscience and, in this case, much conversion is needed so that a Christian may always have an upright conscience, sincerely formed and following the teaching of Christ Jesus.

Mgr. Costantino Di Bruno

Formation of the Lay Canossian

Reading and reflection:

Statutes n°13-14-15, p. 23-25

Reflection may be enriched by the following readings.

"Formation is the work of the Father who wishes to reproduce in each one the image of His Son Crucified and Risen. Thus the formative process of the Lay Canossian is carried out above all by the strength of the Spirit ..."

"I, the Lord, have called you... I took you by the hand, I formed you ..." Is 42:6

"Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay and You are the potter and we are all the work of your hand." Is 64:7

These are some of the many Biblical quotations which underline that man was formed by God. Considering the etymological meaning of the term **formation, that is, giving form**, one presupposes a work, a formative action on the part of a person capable of **structuring and recomposing those functions and potentialities** which do not have a precise form but which constitute, in embryo, **the uniqueness of each person**. As believers, we know we carry the sign of God's formative action, but we also know that God's gift needs **nutriment and care** so that we may be conformed to Christ according to the uniqueness of each person.

"Our whole life is signed by the constant formative action of God, therefore even Initial Formation is proposed and welcomed in the overall plan of On-going Formation."

The necessity for formation is often reaffirmed by the Church in its documents and those most recent express this request, and this is an evident sign that formation is considered as a guarantee of responsible lay people. Here are some extracts: the **first is**

taken from the **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, where moral conscience and the duty of its formation; **the second is taken from Vatican II**, and precisely from the Decree of the Apostolate of Lay people; **the third from the Encyclical of John Paul II, Christifideles Laici** that dedicates the entire fifth chapter to the theme on formation.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- “Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. **A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful ...** the education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin” (CCC n°1783)
- **“The education of the conscience is a lifelong task.** (...) guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.” (CCC n° 1784)
- **In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path,** we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church. (CCC n° 1785)

From the Decree: Apostolicam Actuositatem

- **This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids** which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy. These are to be used by the laity in such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way the laity must make progress

in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties.

(Cfr. Apostolicam Actuositatem n°4)

From “ Christifideles Laici”

- **People are approached in liberty by God who calls everyone to grow, develop and bear fruit.** A person cannot put off a response nor cast off personal responsibility in the matter. The solemn words of Jesus refer to this exalted and serious responsibility: “If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned” (*Jn* 15:6). In this dialogue between God who offers his gifts, and the person who is called to exercise responsibility, there comes the possibility, indeed the necessity, of a total and ongoing formation of the lay faithful, (...) After having described **Christian formation as “a continual process in the individual of maturation in faith and a likening to Christ, according to the will of the Father, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit”**, they have clearly affirmed that the formation of the lay faithful must be placed *among the priorities of a diocese*. It ought to be so placed within the *plan of pastoral action* that the efforts of the whole community (clergy, lay faithful and religious) converge on this goal.” (n°57)
- The fundamental objective of the formation of the lay faithful is an ever-clearer discovery of one's vocation and the ever-greater willingness to live it so as to fulfil one's mission *God calls me and sends me forth* as a labourer in his vineyard. **He calls me and sends me forth** to work for the coming of his Kingdom in history. This personal vocation and mis-

sion defines the dignity and the responsibility of each member of the lay faithful and makes up the focal point of the whole work of formation, whose purpose is the joyous and grateful recognition of this dignity and the faithful and generous living-out of this responsibility. To be able to discover the actual will of the Lord in our lives always involves the following: **a receptive listening to the Word of God and the Church, fervent and constant prayer, recourse to a wise and loving spiritual guide, and a faithful discernment of the gifts and talents given by God, as well as the diverse social and historic situations in which one lives.** Therefore, in the life of each member of the lay faithful there are *particularly significant and decisive moments* for discerning God's call and embracing the mission entrusted by Him. **The Lord, as the master of the labourers in the vineyard, calls at every hour of life** so as to make his holy will more precisely and explicitly known. Therefore, the fundamental and continuous attitude of the disciple should be one of vigilance and **a conscious attentiveness to the voice of God.** It is not a question of simply *knowing* what God wants from each of us in the various situations of life. The individual must *do* what God wants, as we are reminded in the words that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, addressed to the servants at Cana: "Do whatever he tells you" (*Jn* 2:5). However, to act in fidelity to God's will requires a *capability* for acting and *the developing of that capability.* (n°58)

- In discovering and living their proper vocation and mission, the lay faithful must be formed according to the **union** which exists from their being **members of the Church and citizens of human society.** There cannot be

two parallel lives in their existence: on the one hand, the so-called "spiritual" life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called "secular" life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social relationships, in the responsibilities of public life and in culture. The branch, engrafted to the vine which is Christ, bears its fruit in every sphere of existence and activity. In fact, every area of the lay faithful's lives, as different as they are, enters into the plan of God, who desires that these very areas be the "places in time" where **the love of Christ is revealed and realized for both the glory of the Father and service of others.** Every activity, every situation, every precise responsibility as, for example, skill and solidarity in work, love and dedication in the family and the education of children, service to society and public life and the promotion of truth in the area of culture are the occasions ordained by Providence for a "continuous exercise of faith, hope and charity". The Second Vatican Council has invited all the lay faithful to this *unity of life* by forcefully decrying the grave consequences in separating faith from life, and the gospel from culture: (...) **This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age.** Therefore, I have maintained that a faith that does not affect a person's culture is a faith "not fully embraced, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived." (n°59)

- The many interrelated aspects of a **totally integrated formation** of the lay faithful are situated within this unity of life. There is no doubt that **spiritual formation** ought to occupy a privileged place in a person's life. Everyone is called **to grow continually**

in intimate union with Jesus Christ, in conformity to the Father's will, in devotion to others in charity and justice. (...) The situation today points to an ever-increasing urgency for a **doctrinal formation** of the lay faithful, not simply in a better understanding which is natural to faith's dynamism but also in enabling them to "give a reason for their hoping" in view of the world and its grave and complex problems. Therefore, a systematic approach to **catechesis**, geared to age and the diverse situations of life, is an absolute necessity, as is a more decided **Christian promotion of culture**, in response to the perennial yet always new questions that concern individuals and society today. This is especially true for the lay faithful who have responsibilities in various fields of society and public life. Above all, it is indispensable that they have a more exact knowledge and this demands a more widespread and precise presentation of the *Church's social doctrine*, as repeatedly stressed by the Synod Fathers in their presentations (...) The **cultivation of human values** finds a place in the context of a totally integrated formation, bearing a particular significance for the missionary and apostolic activities of the lay faithful. In this regard the Council wrote: "(the lay faithful) should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues related to social behaviour, namely, **honesty, a spirit of justice, sincerity, courtesy, moral courage; without them there is no true Christian life**". In bringing their lives into an organic synthesis, which is, at one and the same time, the manifestation of the unity of "who they are" in the Church and society as well as the condition for the effective fulfilment of their mission, the lay faithful are **to be guided**

interiorly and sustained by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of unity and fullness of life. (n°60)

- where are the lay faithful formed? What are the means of their formation? Who are the **persons and the communities** called upon to assume the task of a totally integrated formation of the lay faithful? Just as the work of human education is intimately connected with fatherhood and motherhood, so **Christian formation finds its origin and its strength in God the Father who loves and educates his children**. Yes, *God is the first and great teacher of his People*, God's work in forming his people is revealed **and fulfilled in Jesus Christ the Teacher**, and reaches to the depths of every individual's heart as a result of the living presence of the Spirit. **Mother Church** is called to take part in the divine work of formation, both through a sharing of her very life, and through her various pronouncements and actions. It is thus that the *lay faithful are formed by the Church and in the Church* in a mutual communion and collaboration of all her members: **clergy, religious and lay faithful**. (...) First of all **the Church is a teacher**, in which the **Pope** takes the "primary" role in the formation of the lay faithful. As successor of Saint Peter, he has the ministry of "confirming his brothers in the faith", (...) The one and universal Church is present in various parts of the world, in and through the **particular Churches**. In each of them the **Bishop** in his person has a responsibility towards the lay faithful, in forming the animation and guidance of their Christian life through the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacraments. Situated and at work within the particular Church or diocese is the **Parish** which

has the essential **task of a more personal and immediate formation of the lay faithful**. In fact, because it is in the position to reach more easily individual persons and singular groups, the parish is called **to instruct its members in hearing God's Word, in liturgical and personal dialogue with God, in the life of fraternal charity**, and in allowing a more direct and concrete perception of the sense of ecclesial communion and responsibility in the Church's mission. (...) In the formation that the lay faithful receive from their diocese and parish, especially concerning communion and mission, the help that diverse members of the Church can give to each other is particularly important. This mutual help also aids in revealing the mystery of the Church as Mother and Teacher. Priests and religious ought to assist the lay faithful in their formation (...) In turn, the lay faithful themselves can and should help priests and religious in the course of their spiritual and pastoral journey.. (n°61)

- **The Christian family, as the "domestic Church"**, also makes up a natural and fundamental school for formation in the faith: **father and mother receive from the Sacrament of Matrimony the grace and the ministry of the Christian education of their children**, before whom they bear witness and to whom they transmit both human and religious values. While learning their first words, children learn also the praise of God, whom they feel is near them as a loving and providential Father; while learning the first acts of love, children also learn to open themselves to others, and through the gift of self receive the sense of living as a human being. The daily life itself of a truly Christian family makes up the first "experience of Church", intended to find confirma-

tion and development in an active and responsible process of the children's introduction into the wider ecclesial community and civil society. The more that Christian spouses and parents grow in the awareness that their "domestic church" participates in the life and mission of the universal Church, so much the more will their sons and daughters be able to be formed in a "sense of the Church" and will perceive all the beauty of dedicating their energies to the service of the Kingdom of God. **Schools and Catholic universities, as well as centers of spiritual renewal** which are becoming ever more widespread in these days, are also important places for formation. In the present social and historical context which is marked by an extensively deep cultural involvement, the Synod Fathers have emphasized that parents' participation in school life-besides being always necessary and without substitution is no longer enough. What is needed is to prepare the lay faithful to dedicate themselves to the work of rearing their children as a true and proper part of Church mission. What is needed is to constitute and develop this "formation community" which is together comprised of parents, teachers, clergy, women and men religious and representatives of youth. *In order that the school can suitably fulfill its natural function in formation, the lay faithful ought to feel charged to demand from everyone and for everyone a true freedom in education, even through opportune civil legislation.* The Synod Fathers expressed words of esteem and encouragement to all those lay faithful, both women and men, who with a civic and Christian spirit, fulfil a task which is involved in the education of children both in schools and institutes of formation.

In addition they have emphasized the **urgent need in various schools, whether Catholic or not, for teachers and professors among the lay faithful to be true witnesses of the gospel, through their example of life, their professional competence and uprightness, their Christian inspired teaching**, preserving always as is obvious the autonomy of various sciences and disciplines. (...) The simultaneous presence of clergy, the lay faithful and men and women religious, offers students a vivid image of the Church and makes recognition of its riches easier. **Groups, associations and movements** also have their place in the formation of the lay faithful. In fact they have the possibility, each with its own method, of offering a formation through a deeply shared experience in the apostolic life, as well as having the opportunity to integrate, to make concrete and specific the formation that their members receive from other persons and communities. (n°62)

- Formation is not the privilege of a few, but a right and duty of all. In this regard the Synod Fathers have said: "Possibilities of formation should be proposed to all, especially the poor, who can also be a source of formation for all"; and they added: "Suitable means to help each person fulfil a full, human and Christian vocation should be applied to formation." For the purpose of a truly incisive and effective pastoral activity the **formation of those who will form others is to be developed through appropriate courses or suitable schools. Forming those who, in turn, will be given the responsibility for the formation of the lay faithful, constitutes a basic requirement of assuring the general and widespread formation of all the lay faithful.**

special attention ought to be devoted to the local culture in the work of formation. (...) In the work of formation some convictions reveal themselves as particularly necessary and fruitful. First of all, there is the conviction that one cannot offer a true and effective formation to others if the individual has not taken on or developed a personal responsibility for formation: this, in fact, is essentially a **"formation of self"**. In addition, there is the conviction that at one and the same time each of us is the goal and principle of formation: the more we are formed and the more we feel the need to pursue and deepen our formation, still more will **we be formed and be rendered capable of forming others**. It is particularly important to know that the work of formation, while having intelligent recourse to the means and methods available from **human science**, is made more effective the more it is open to the **action of God**. Only the branch which does not fear being pruned by the heavenly vinedresser can bear much fruit for the individual and for others. (n°63)



HUMBLE LISTENING TO JESUS CHRIST CRUCIFIED

"If you desire a sermon, go to the feet of our Crucified Lord and be assured that one word of His will be more fruitful than a series of Lenten sermons." (Epistolario III/1, p. 290)

The primary source of every revealed word is God, the Father. The final end of His communication is the human person. The Angels and Prophets are the mediators who

prepare the advent of the Son of God, His Word made flesh. **Christ is the most faithful revelation of the will of the Father:** “This is my Son, the Beloved; He enjoys my favour. Listen to Him.” Listening is the first step towards love and one implies the other. “Listening is more valuable than sacrifice” (Qo 4:17). In fact, sacrifice, however great it be, is useless in the eyes of God if love is lacking. The sacrifice of Christ has been greatly meritorious for all of us just because it is enriched by His infinite love.

But for **listening**, to be attentive and respectful of the other, the availability of one’s whole being, and the forgetfulness of self so as not to distort what the other wishes to communicate is necessary. It calls for the capacity for acceptance so that the other feels at ease and comfortable. This is difficult enough with human people. It is impossible with God. When the Lord wants us to listen to Him, He Himself prepares us to listen: **“I will give them a heart and an attentive ear”** (Bar 2:31). How often does Jesus in His earthly life meet people who were obstinate at heart, deaf to His words, incapable of understanding and receiving the truth (Jn 8:43). Between the invitation of God: **“... listen to my beloved Son”** (Mt 17:5) and the desire of the soul: **“Make me hear your voice”** (Ct 8:13) the merciful action of the One who calls Himself Father intervenes: **“The Lord makes me to hear, to listen like a disciple”** (Is 50:4). Listening, therefore, more than being a human initiative, is a response to a grace coming from the Lord. The father is the farmer who prepares the soil of the soul to receive the seed of his Word. “Those who receive the seed in rich soil are those who hear the Word” (Mk 4:20) and “a child of God” listens to the Word of God. The Son hears what the Father says and communicates the words exactly as the Father has told Him. (Jn 12:50) To put oneself in the school of Jesus means to receive as a gift the very words of the Father and the very life of the Son. “Whoever listen to my words has eternal life” says Jesus.” (Jn 5:24). To listen to Jesus means to

enter into His intimacy: “If anyone hears me calling and opens the door, I will come to him.” (Rev 3:20).

Mary listen to the Father’s Word communicated to her by the angel and She entered into such an intimacy with the love of the Father as to conceive His only begotten Son. Everyone who puts self in an attitude of listening to the Word of God receives the very same life-giving power: Jesus Himself says it to all those who were envious of His mother’s lot: “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the Word of God and put it into practice.” (Lk 8:21)

This is why **Magdalene** tells her Daughters: **“If you want a sermon, go to the feet of Our Crucified Lord and be assured that one Word of His will bear more fruit than a series of Lenten sermons.”**

From the height of the Cross Christ speaks to us with His silent suffering love. Christ Crucified proclaims powerfully to me the love of the Father. If I listen to such a cry and receive that love, then the Holy Spirit will work in me what He has done in Mary: I become like Her, the Mother of Jesus, and with Her, the Mother of the Church.

This is the fundamental, charismatic mission of every member of the Canossian Family. Such a task is certainly more fruitful than a Lenten mission for it is begetting of Christ and, according to Christ, it makes the soul as blessed as His Mother.

Besides, Magdalene says: **“I am pleased that the preacher whom I have given you, namely, the Crucified Lord, is giving you those sermons as I expected. Believe me, the Daughters of Charity must depend only on this preacher.”** (Epistolario III/1, p. 298).

The Lay Canossian must listen to the words of life of the Crucified Love. His Words, especially those from the cross, are “spirit and life”. (Jn 6:63) They are vitally active and the sacrament of salvation.

“The Lord ... in this waterless place brought you water from the hardest rock” (Dt 8:15) and each one is invited to quench his thirst with life-giving water: **“If anyone is thirsty,**

let him come to me! The one who believes in me ... fountains of living water will flow from his breast." (Jn 7:37-38) The words said by Jesus on the Cross obtain pardon for the executioners, made Mary the Mother of the Church and offered and gave Paradise to a repentant thief.

The **"All is consummated!"** (Jn 19:30) declared that all the prophecies had been fulfilled in Him and that men's redemption had come.

Every Lay Canossian at the feet of the Crucified One can hear all this and cry out to his God:

"He has set my feet on the rock." Ps 40:3.

"O Lord, my rock ..." Ps 18:3.

"My heart is ready, O God." Ps 108:2.

"You are the rock of my heart." Ps 73:26.

"To listen to you is to live; to listen to you is real blessedness." Lk 11:28.



Apostolic Commitments of the Tertiaries

Regarding the works of Charity, Magdalene called on the Tertiaries to reflect, first of all, on **charity towards their family members**. She, too, was generously involved for many years in assisting the sick, old grand-uncles and her uncle, a widower, in educating her little cousin Charles, in forming her younger sisters and instructing the servants. The Plan reads,

"The first way to practise ... the works of charity embraced by the Institute, is that of practising them in their families as much as possible and with total commitment, care, patience, docility, meekness, gentleness.

The Tertiaries, in special way those who, because of circumstances or for special duties could not extend their apostolic work

outside the family, would devoted themselves to:

- *form the young members of their family,*
- *instruct them in religion*
- *take care that they receive the Sacraments well.*

Besides, each Tertiary should, as far as possible,

- *help in the parish doctrine on feast days,*
- *assist the sick members of their family in a very charitable way.*

Magdalene took into account, with wisdom and prudence, their respective condition as virgins, widows and married women.

The Virgin Tertiaries

Magdalene, in the Plan, pointed out works more suitable to the youth.

"To the virgins should be allotted especially the formation of youth. They will

- *animate, instruct, prepare them dutifully to the reception of the Holy Sacraments of Confirmation, Penance, Eucharist,*
- *draw the away from moral dangers as best as possible,*
- *accustom them to dress modestly,*
- *teach them to beware of moral dangers in their working place.*
- *On feast days encourage the girls to attend Christian Doctrine in the parish,*
- *Look after the girls in time of relaxation and entertainment, if they are available: either keeping them close by or taking them to suitable places of entertainment,*
- *Assist dutifully in the parish Christian Doctrine in any role suitable to them, except that of a nurse, unless they are over 40 years of age.*

The Widowed Tertiaries

Widows, who choose to remain such and are not bound by other family commitments, may, according to Magdalene's plan, devote themselves to any work of charity, always in conformity with the works embraced by the Institute of the Daughters of Charity.

- *Verify how the girls going to school in the houses of the Institute behave at home.*
- *The visitation of the sick.*
- *Support the work carried out by the Daughters of Charity in hospitals.*
- *Teaching Christian Doctrine in the parish.*
- *Accepting the duty of a nurse ... visiting not only the sick colleagues of the Christian Doctrine, but also the sick Tertiaries.*

The Married Tertiaries

With regard to the "married" Tertiaries Magdalene made a further distinction: women who had children and those who had none. The latter, if their husbands agreed, could devote themselves to many works of charity like the widows. In particular, they could:

- *attend Christian Doctrine in the parish and take up any post,*
- *visit the sick women in hospital and help them solve their problems,*
- *support needy girls and find a shelter for the poor women leaving hospital.*

For married Tertiaries:

- *care not only for their children, but also for the servants and helpers,*
- *demand that their daughters dress modestly and behave well at home ...*
- *if the essential duties at home are taken care of, they, too, like married Tertiaries, could teach doctrine, assist the sick in hospitals and carry out other works of charity.*

Maria Nicolai



Questions for reflection

- In his reflection Mgr. Di Bruno speaks of the possibility for the person, in good faith, to falsify truth because of an unformed conscience. Instead, what allows a person to judge and then act according to a right conscience?
- The separation of faith from life, dealt with even in *Christifideles Laici* at n°59, is a danger for the lay person. The Council Decree proposes a solution. What do you think of it?
- The proclamations of the Council Fathers placed formation "among the priorities of the Dioceses"; can we verify this in the reality of our parish community?
- "God calls me and sends me"; this is what creates the need for formation. Is the vocation to apostolic mission, proper to each baptised person, sufficient to motivate my formation? Are there others?
- Number 60 of the Encyclical *Christifideles Laici* speaks of integral formation. On which aspect, spiritual, doctrinal, ethical, charismatic, do I feel a need for further formation? How can we improve proposals for formation in our Association? How can we promote the formation of formators within our Association?
- Family and school (our Canossian schools) are two privileged ambits of formation. Today, which are the positive and negative aspects of formation?



Final Prayer

We recommend you to read this interesting story that will help us to discover the value and fruitfulness which are hidden in this Lenten Season which we are now living.

One day, Satan decided to increase the value of his bad action.

He gathered together the Heads of the departments and the Staff of the "infernal division of propaganda e publicity", in order to think up new campaigns to tempt and trick humanity.

Above all, he wanted at all costs, with real wickedness, to destroy the sense of life in the hearts of men and women!

"Tell them that God does not exist!", suggested a devil. Satan grumbled: "I would like something less obvious!" "Tell them that none of their actions will have any consequences," suggested another devil.

Satan shook his head: "They already know this themselves." A third one suggested: "Tell them they are so far away from the true path, they will never be able to come back because people are not capable anymore to change."

Satan reacted again: "We have already tried that." Then the eldest and shrewdest of the devils intervened: "Let them simply believe that they have a long, long time before them!"

*Satan smiled, devilishly satisfied:
"Yes, this is a good idea!"*

The meaning of the story is clear: until we have the certainty of having a long time before us and at our disposal, everything seems ours, everything is secured and guaranteed. We feel we are the masters of time and life and we do with them what we want. The risk is that

we behave as owners, not only of things but even of people, thinking that we do not have to give an account to anyone for a long time to come.

Let us conclude our reflection remembering that we are responsible for each other because we are Sons and Brothers

Our Father ...



Personal Notes



Personal Notes

Argentina-Paraguay



Let us always remember our resolutions of the V° International Congress:

"I recommend to you my Beloved Poor."

During this month, let us remember especially this Canossian Province.

Let us offer God, Father of the Poor, our sacrifices and our prayer for these brothers and sisters in their needs:

- political equilibrium
- end of drugs and production of cocaine
- end of human trafficking
- end of corruption
- jobs for young people
- adequate salary
- better life conditions
- respect for the native people and their natural resources
- respect for the dignity of children, young people and women
- conversion of drug dealers and property speculators

Let us once more take up Magdalene's invitation to love our beloved poor with a big, big heart, in imitation of Mary's great Heart who, on Calvary, offered the life of Her Only Son.

Let us not forget ...
LET US PRAY ...



