

Meditations: Sunday of the Second Week of Ordinary Time (Year C)

Some reflections that can assist our prayer during the second week of Ordinary Time. The topics are: God calls us by name; unity arises from a desire to enrich one another; Mary fosters unity.

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WHEN WE meet someone, the first thing we ask is their name. A personal name holds two dimensions. On the one hand, it distinguishes someone as a unique, unrepeatable individual. At the same time, revealing our name allows us to form a relationship with others and build a sense of community.

The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you shall be called by a new name, pronounced by the mouth of the Lord (Is 62:2). These words from the prophet Isaiah, addressed to Jerusalem, can also be applied to our lives. During the rite of Baptism, the name of the one receiving the sacrament is asked because “God calls each person by name, loving us individually in the concreteness of our own story.”[1] Each of us is loved by God with a unique, preferential love. Our name is on his lips, like a mother trying to make her child

smile or console them after a fall. The prophet continues: *You shall no longer be called 'Forsaken,' nor your land 'Desolate'; but you shall be called 'My Delight Is in Her,' and your land 'Married,' for the Lord delights in you (Is 62:4).* God is constantly offering us words of encouragement and consolation. Do we regularly sense them in our hearts?

Sometimes we think that prayer is mainly about saying things to God, but it can be helpful to listen first to the way God calls our name and invites us to open our lives to his presence. Our vocation is rooted in this loving relationship with God. Just as each of us has a personal name that makes us unique in the eyes of the Most Holy Trinity, we also know God's name: "Love is the name of God Himself." [2]

THERE ARE different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; there are different workings, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone (1 Cor 12:4-5). These words of St. Paul, found in today's second reading, emphasize the unity of the Church, which embraces a rich diversity. God invites each of us to follow Him on a personal path of intimate union, calling us by name. He cares about our lives, the talents He has given us, and the limitations we encounter when we try to carry out his plans. At the same time, God's call brings about one of its most beautiful fruits: the formation of a family made up of people with different gifts and sensitivities. It brings us great joy to know that we belong to a family so richly endowed!

“Legitimate diversity is in no way opposed to the Church's unity, but

rather enhances her splendour and contributes greatly to the fulfilment of her mission.”[3] In the Church, there are various ways to proclaim the Gospel because her unity is founded on creative love. Our names, which God speaks with such affection, open us to others so they may also call us, and together we can spread the fragrance of Christ to every corner of the world.

“I have said time and time again since 1928,” St. Josemaría said, “that variety in thought and action in what is temporal and in what is a matter of theological opinion poses no problem for the Work. On the contrary, the diversity which exists and will always exist among the members of Opus Dei is a sign of good spirit, of an honest life, of respect for the legitimate opinion of each individual.”[4] In this small part of the Church that is the Work, we admire the great variety of

perspectives. Becoming a closer-knit family every day means fostering our unique ways of being and thinking while also seeking to enrich ourselves with the insights and attitudes of those around us.

TODAY'S GOSPEL introduces us to the lively scene of a wedding in Cana of Galilee. It is striking that shortly after choosing his first disciples, Jesus invites them to join a celebration rich in communal meaning. Similarly, while calling each of us to a profound personal responsibility in our families and professional lives, He also reminds us of another dimension: the sense of community. Being part of the Church, God's family, also means learning to rejoice in the company of others.

In the middle of the lively celebration, the wine runs out. Only a discreet, perceptive woman notices the great distress of the organizers. The joyful atmosphere could have turned into a great disappointment in an instant. But Mary intercedes with her Son, saying, *They have no wine (Jn 2:3)*. At a wedding, wine can symbolize unity and harmony, and our Mother, who cares tirelessly for the Church, does not want it to run out. She always intercedes so that our diversity becomes a source of mutual understanding and admiration, rather than discord.

Do whatever He tells you (Jn 2:5). With these words, Mary offers us a phrase that could summarize our entire lives. God's call — the name He has given us — leads us to build up the Church with our lives of self-giving. "God's calling gives us a mission: it invites us to share in the unique task of the Church, to bear

witness to Christ before our fellow men and so draw all things toward God.”[5] We can call our Mother by her sweet name, asking her to help us care for the unity of the Church by joyfully and lovingly living out our vocation.

[1] Pope Francis, General Audience, 18-IV-2018.

[2] Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, 2-V-2010.

[3] St. John Paul II, *Ut unum sint*, no. 50.

[4] *Conversations*, no. 38.

[5] *Christ is Passing By*, no. 45

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