

# Meditations: Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Easter

Some reflections that can enrich our prayer during this Easter season.

- The peace that comes from God
- Fruit of the Holy Mass
- Peace, a result of struggle

THOSE WHO KNEW Blessed Alvaro del Portillo well say that his life embodied very clearly those words of Saint Josemaría in *The Forge*: “A clear mark of the man of God, of the woman of God, is the peace in their

souls; they have peace and they give peace to the people around them.”<sup>[1]</sup> Every heart longs for this: to attain peace, to not live in uncertainty, to be convinced there are no sorrows that cannot be comforted. But this is not easy to achieve. We always have matters that don’t go well, limitations that we have to live with, events that seem impossible to resolve... To have a lasting peace and give it to others, our efforts are certainly needed, but the most important thing is to find the inexhaustible source of peace in God.

“The peace that the world offers us is a peace without tribulations; it offers us an artificial peace, a peace that is reduced to tranquility. It is a peace that only looks to one’s own concerns, one’s own security, to make sure that nothing is lacking. It is a tranquility that encloses us in ourselves, that does not see beyond us. The world teaches us the path to

peace with an anesthesia; it anesthetizes us so as not to see another reality in everyone's life: the Cross. Saint Paul says that we must enter the Kingdom of heaven through many tribulations. But can one have peace in tribulation? By our own effort, no. Tribulations are real: pain, illness, death... The peace that Jesus gives is a gift: it is a gift of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>[2]</sup>—

In our relationship with our Lord we find the serenity of soul that we need both for ourselves and for others. Only He has the “key” to peace. All our dreams of happiness are fulfilled in Christ. We too want to have a peace that spreads naturally to those around us, because it transmits the truest way of seeing everything: with God's eyes.

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WE ARE MOVED by the words that our Lord addresses to the apostles at the Last Supper and that we find in today's Gospel: *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (Jn 14:27)*. What makes us lose our serenity? What causes our heart to tremble or waver? Only in our Lord will we find rest, the real peace of knowing that the only true serenity is to put ourselves in God's hands. Saint Josemaría said: "Foster, in your soul and your heart, in your intellect and will, a spirit of trust and abandonment in the loving Will of the heavenly Father. From there comes the inner peace you long for."<sup>[3]</sup>

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At each Mass we experience the communication of peace that only God grants. Just before receiving Communion, after the Our Father, the priest opens his arms to all

humanity and says: “The peace of the Lord be with you.” The deepest serenity of soul flows from the altar. All the good of the Church, of each Christian, of each man and woman, stems from Christ, from the Holy Sacrifice of Calvary. A Christian whose life is united to the Mass, “who lives united to Christ's heart, can have no goals but these: peace in society, peace in the Church, peace in one's soul, the peace of God that will reach its fulness when his kingdom comes.”<sup>[4]</sup>

“‘I know the plans I have for you, plans for peace and not affliction,’ was God's promise through Jeremiah. The liturgy applies these words to Jesus, for in Him we are clearly shown that God does love us in this way. He did not come to condemn us, to accuse us of meanness and smallness. He came to save us, to pardon us, to excuse us, to bring us peace and joy.”<sup>[5]</sup>

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS, when commenting on Saint Paul's list of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, said that whoever "abides in charity abides in God and God in him. Hence the consequence of charity is joy. But the perfection of joy is peace."<sup>[6]</sup> And he continues: "Now peace implies these two things, namely, that we are not disturbed by external things, and that our desires rest altogether in one object. Wherefore after charity and joy, peace is given the third place."<sup>[7]</sup> Peace enables us to put God first and to separate ourselves from whatever separates us from Him. In the interior life, the initiative depends on God and his grace. At the same time, with his help, we can strengthen our own correspondence, our personal struggle. "You write and I quote: 'My joy and my peace. I will never have real happiness if I don't have peace. And what is peace?

Peace is something closely related to war. Peace is a consequence of victory. Peace demands of me a continual struggle. Without a struggle I will never have peace.""<sup>[8]</sup>—

Saint Josemaría taught that peace is a result of war, but not just any war. It is the war we wage against ourselves interiorly: overcoming selfishness, guiding our sentiments so that they are ever closer to those of Jesus, using all our strength to spread good, etc. In short, struggling to carry out what is pleasing to God, distancing ourselves from what separates us from Him. In order to have peace and to give it, in a certain sense we have to "conquer" it little by little. "Men are forever 'making peace' and forever getting entangled in wars. For they have forgotten the advice to struggle interiorly and to go to God for help. Then He will conquer, and we will obtain peace for ourselves

and for our own homes, for society and for the world.”<sup>[9]</sup>

Our Lady is Queen of Peace because she was always eager to do God’s will, despite all the suffering and disconcerting events in her life. We ask Mary to obtain for us peace of mind and serenity when we face personal or family problems in our own life.

<sup>[1]</sup> Saint Josemaría, *Forge*, no. 649.

<sup>[2]</sup> Francis, Homily, May 16, 2017.

<sup>[3]</sup> Saint Josemaría, *Furrow*, no. 850.

<sup>[4]</sup> *Christ is Passing By*, no. 170.

<sup>[5]</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 165.

<sup>[6]</sup> Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica I-II*, q. 70, a. 3.

<sup>[7]</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>[8]</sup> Saint Josemaría, *The Way*, no. 308.

<sup>[9]</sup> Saint Josemaría, *The Forge*, no. 102.

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