

Day 42. Discernment

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When we resort to violence, we show that we no longer know anything about God, who is our Father, or even about others, who are our brothers and sisters. We lose sight of why we are in the world and even end up committing senseless acts of cruelty. We see this in the folly of war, where Christ is crucified yet another time. Christ is once more nailed to the Cross in mothers who mourn the unjust death of husbands and sons. He is crucified in refugees who flee from bombs with children in their arms. He is crucified in the elderly left alone to die; in young people deprived of a future; in soldiers sent to kill their brothers and sisters. Christ is being crucified there, today. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Many people heard these extraordinary words, but only one person responded to them. He was a criminal, crucified next to Jesus. We can imagine that the mercy of Christ stirred up in him one last hope and led him to speak these words: “Jesus, remember me” (Lk 23:42). As if to say: “Everyone else has forgotten me, yet you keep thinking of those who crucify you. With you, then, there is also a place for me”. The good thief accepted God as his life was ending, and in this way, his life began anew. In the hell of this world, he saw heaven opening up: “Today you will be with me in Paradise”. This is the marvel of God’s forgiveness, which turned the last request of a man condemned to death into the first canonization of history. Brothers and sisters, in the course of this week, let us cling to the certainty that God can forgive every sin.

He forgives everyone.

He can bridge every distance, and turn all mourning into dancing.

Homily, Palm Sunday, 2022