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Mgr Vidal, Archbishop of Valencia

THE EUCHARIST, MYSTERY OF COMMUNION

In the dynamics of our meeting, we gathered around the Table of the Word and the Eucharist to live the central moment of our day. The theme of this morning's reflection was "Synodality: a path of communion". The Second Vatican Council reminded us that the Church is, in her deepest identity, a mystery of communion; that her mission is to be an instrument for the human family to become the family of the children of God; that she is there to bring about the unity of humanity with God and of men and women among themselves. If the Church's mission is the realization of communion, she is called to realize this ideal in herself, in her daily inner life. If she does not live as the family of God's children; if she is not, in the words of St. Augustine, "a reconciled world," she is not fulfilling her mission.

In a world and also in a Church in which ideologies often condition too much the coexistence among people, and even the interpretation and living of the faith, because they become absolute, synodality calls us to live in the Church in a new way, so that the Church may become what God wants of her: an instrument of communion and a sign of unity. Living synodically in the Church is not easy. It requires overcoming three temptations:

a. The temptation of "self-referentiality". None of us is the center of the Church, nor does the Church live for herself. This temptation is overcome by placing God and his Word at the center of the Church's life. To live synodally is not to know how to listen to ourselves and share opinionated ideas so that each of us ends up sticking to our own way of thinking. Synodality demands that we listen together to the Word of God in order to discover, taught by the Holy Spirit, the paths we are called to follow at the present time in order to proclaim the Gospel. To live synodality is to place Jesus at the center of the life of the Church; it is to feel that we are disciples of the same master; it is to allow Him to be the one who shapes the life of our communities.

b. To live synodality, humility is necessary to accept that the Church does not begin now, nor with us. Listening to the Spirit must be done by interpreting the Word from the living tradition of the Church. This frees us from the immobility that confuses the will of God with human traditions (which is the temptation of the Pharisees, as we have seen in the Gospel), and also from the rupturist attitudes of those who feel themselves to be the saviors of the Church. Synodality demands the humility to accept that the Spirit builds the Church by making use of all the charisms that he raises up in the People of God and that are an expression of its inexhaustible richness, and that no one has the magic remedy to solve all the problems. The Spirit urges us to live our witness in humility.

c. Living in the Church requires overcoming the temptation to rigorism and rigidities that close us off from mercy. In the Gospel, faced with the hardness of heart and legalism of the Pharisees, who judge the disciples because they had plucked some ears of corn on the Sabbath, Jesus reminds them of two things: first, that the Gospel, which is Himself, is greater than the Sabbath, which is the essence of the Law. And, secondly, that the fullness of the Gospel is mercy. In the first reading we discover the profound reason for this teaching of Jesus: the heart of the Father is a merciful heart. Hezekiah's prayer touches the heart of God who, hearing his prayers and seeing his tears, is able to change his plans. The Father's heart is compassionate and merciful; he does not seek to condemn but to give life and is pleased that his children are happy; he does not want to look for reasons to die, but to show his love.



The Church is a mystery of communion because she is called to be, in the words of a contemporary theologian, a "place of forgiveness", a place where we can ask for forgiveness in all confidence, because we live in the certainty that we will be forgiven "from the heart".

The Teams of Our Lady have the mission to give a witness to the world: to show that, if you are open to the Grace of God, it is possible to make the life of your families authentic domestic churches, where communion in love is lived; to make your families places where mutual listening is possible because you are attentive to the Word of God; show that the presence and companionship of the Lord in the journey of your family life is not an obstacle to communion among you, but rather strengthens it; show that the Eucharist is that bread in which, in the words of St. Augustine, "we are taught how we must love unity". If you live in this way, you will be the seed of a Church that believes in communion and lives it.

Mary, the Mother of the Church who always accompanies us with her silent presence, but always attentive to the needs of her children, is a source of evangelization and a generator of communion in your families and in the family of the children of God which is the Church. In her hands we place the present and the future of the Church, of all Christian families and of the Teams of Our Lady throughout the world. May she make what we are living these days bear fruits of Christian life in our churches.

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