

ALL THAT THE FATHER HAS IS MINE; THE SPIRIT WILL TAKE WHAT IS MINE AND DECLARE IT TO YOU - Biblical Commentary by F. Alberto Maggi OSM

Jn 16.12-15

At that time Jesus said to his disciples,

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."

In Jesus' farewell speech to His disciples He says "*I still have many things to say to you,...*" many things, so Jesus ensures them that He will continue to speak to them when He will not be with them. His presence in the community is a real presence and it is the presence of the teacher teaching His followers.

"..but you cannot bear them now." Why does Jesus say this? Because only those that can understand Jesus' message, are those, like Him, ready to give their lives for the lives of others. And the disciples have not yet reached this level.

Jesus ensures the community of believers for all times, that the more you can love and the more we give to each other, the more you can understand His word. Then Jesus proceeds saying: "*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...*", meaning that there is a path that the community must take through Jesus and in truth. Jesus has already described Himself as "the way", the path, well the Spirit is the one that leads in the truth.

That which God is, that which mankind is, cannot be fully understood if not through grades of knowledge and experience always more profound. Gradually the love received from the Father transforms itself in love communicated to others, the community grows in this love and in this

dimension of growth the Father's image always appears more clearly. This is the path in the truth.

The truth for Jesus is not an acquired doctrine, one does not have the truth, but one is the truth and does the truth. In the discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus had said: "*For everyone who does wicked things hates the light..*" (John 3, 20) and then to the opposition to evil He did not say, "*whoever does good*", but "*whoever does what is true....*" so with "*to do the truth*" means to do good for others.

Therefore one does not go towards the truth, but one goes into the truth, becoming part in this dimension, growing in Christ's love that works for the good of others.

"...he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." The function of the Spirit in the community of believers is that of announcing the things of the future, literally, rendering the community able to always affront problems emerging in time.

To the new needs of the believers, of the community and society, the holy spirit, the spirit of truth, always gives new answers, avoiding the risk that can run the religious institution, to reply with old answers to the new needs of mankind. Jesus does not announce a new revelation on the behalf of the Spirit, but actualizes the message in a new way and new form for the life of the community.

And it is Jesus that guarantees the vitality and life of the church. "*He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you*" The role of the Spirit is the continues and unbroken proposal to the community of Jesus' message. It isn't – as I have already said – of a new message, but that of the understanding of the said message in the new circumstances that will be presented.

This action shows more, very time the love that Jesus has for His followers. This is the meaning of "*glorify*". At the end Jesus ensures: "*All that the Father has is mine;*" the fullness of love, "*..therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*" What God and Jesus have in common is the fullness of love, the Spirit, and it is the communication of this love the work of the Spirit to those that accept it.

The repeat for the third time of the verb "declare" shows the importance that the evangelist puts on the announcing; it is not only an invite to listen, but accept it and practice it. The criterion of insight, is to see if what is communicated comes from God, is love.

If the message, that which is announced, is in favour of mankind and his good, comes from the Father, that has at heart the welfare and the growth of his sons. The Father and Jesus have in common one passion: the good of mankind!