



## Reflection 2

### FOLLOWING CLELIA'S FOOTSTEPS TOWARD THE HEART OF JESUS

*"Take your rest in the most loving Heart of Jesus"*

*"Take your rest in the most loving Heart of Jesus, and unite it to the rest that Jesus takes in the bosom of his Divine Father and in the Most Holy Sacrament. Offer Him every breath and every beat of your heart that these may keep watch before Him while you sleep, as so many acts of love and sacrifice of your entire being; and beg Him that your rest may give you new strength to serve Him better." (SA, p. 185)*

[Mother Clelia] dialogued with Jesus in prayer and always maintained deep union with Him, even in moments of desert-like aridity. If her heart and senses were unable to feel the presence of the Lord, her mind enlightened by faith told her that He was always present. How many times she had to sacrifice her own human reasoning to leave room for faith. *"Jesus whispers to my soul that works are the language of the heart; that from the fruits and not from the leaves do you know the goodness of a plant. He not only wants me to forgive from the heart all the wrongs received from my offenders, but to seek to do them as much good as possible, to be sure to pray much for them, to be compassionate with them and to excuse them, desiring that they too take part in His heavenly glory." (Diary of Mother Clelia, Presentation by Mother Miriam)*

Mother Clelia says: "If we would have greater faith and a sincere desire to draw close to Jesus and to follow him, the Church where he dwells would be the place of our most cherished delights, and at the foot of

the Holy Tabernacle we would spend the most beautiful hours of our life.” (SA, p.193)

“Beg Jesus to speak incessantly to your soul. I assure, you, my daughter, that His voice will teach you more in a single day than can the schools of learned men in many years... Beg Him, beseech Him, implore Him insistently the way the Canaanite woman did, to deign not only to speak to you but to make you taste the sweetness of his paternal voice; and I assure you that if you begin to be faithful to his voice, little by little you won’t be able to withdraw from him at all, provided, however, that you keep your heart and all your mental faculties united to him.” (SA, p. 56)

### **WORD OF GOD** (Luke 10: 38-42)

*As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.” The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”*

- Martha. She is the one who takes the initiative to welcome Jesus to her home. Dedicated to that task, she is worried about the many things to prepare and is upset to find herself alone in this. She is burdened with much work, is anxious, and very tense. So Martha goes to Jesus and makes a legitimate request for help: why must her sister leave her alone to do the work? Jesus notices that she is worried and that her heart is torn between the desire to serve him a meal worthy of him and the desire to listen to him. Jesus does not fault her service but the anxiety with which she carries it out.
- Mary. She is the one who listens to the Word. Her action is described in the imperfect tense—“she was listening”—a continual action of listening to Jesus’ Word. Mary’s attitude contrasts with her sister’s worry and tension. Jesus says that Mary has chosen “the better part,” that is, listening to his Word. Jesus’ response tells the reader there are

not two choices, of which one is better than the other, but there is just one that is good: to welcome the Word. This attitude does not imply evasion of one's daily responsibility, but the awareness that listening to the Word takes precedence over every service and action.

There must be a balance between action and contemplation. Luke is particularly attentive to link listening to the Word to a relationship with the Lord. It is not a matter of dividing the day into times dedicated to prayer and others dedicated to service. The desire to listen to God cannot be replaced with other activities: we must dedicate time and space to seeking the Lord. The task of cultivating the skill of listening to the Word is born from attention to God: everything contributes to it—the time and the ambience. However, the desire to meet God must be born in our hearts. There are no techniques that automatically bring us to an encounter with God. It is a question of love: we must listen to Jesus, be with Him, and then the gift is given and a loving relationship begins. The balance between listening and serving involves all believers, both in family life and professional and social relationships. How can baptized persons persevere and reach a mature faith? They must learn to listen to the Word of God. It is difficult but the most secure way to a mature faith.

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## **THE CHURCH – POPE FRANCIS**

*Pope Francis calls us to listen attentively to the voice of Christ: "It is important to rediscover **silence**, the ideal means for grasping the musicality of the language with which the Lord speaks to us. It is very much like the language of a father and mother: reassuring, full of love and tenderness."*

***"How does the Lord speak to us?"** It may seem strange to hear a great God say, 'I am the Lord your God, who grasp your right hand,' as a father to a child. 'It is I who say to you, Do not fear! I will help you.' It is like a father who runs to his child who is having a nightmare and says to him, 'Don't be afraid! I am here.'"*

***But what is the voice of Jesus? How can we hear it?** "Jesus speaks to us in the same way. He comes to us. When we see a father or mother going to their little child, we see them become small; they speak like a child and act like a child. Those who watch them from a distance might think they are being ridiculous. But the love of a father and mother*

needs to draw near and go down to the child's world. Even if they speak normally, the child would understand them. But they want to speak like a child. They come close. They make themselves children. And so does the Lord." *(from the homily at Santa Marta – 12/12/2013)*

**From the writings of Servant of God Fr. Dolindo Ruotolo, Neapolitan priest (1882-1970)**

Do not get worked up about what you can do or what you can write. Pray silently with humble trust, with trustful humility. Prayer brings the general's battle plan into the combat, brings you provisions from heaven. You pray and graces rain down, the angels go into motion. Prayer is like a bombardment from above: before advancing against evil, mount the airplane, climb high in the sky, and from there you will drop the bombs that upset Satan's plan. Pray with secure trust in God: "Lord, bring an end to this evil, I beg you, for your glory." This sentence, so simple, rising up to heaven becomes a cloud, filled with electricity, curves toward the earth; then lightning strikes, burns dust depots, blows up artillery, tills the land; and then refreshing rain falls.

**PRACTICE**

- Pay attention to the Lord's voice. He speaks to us each day; we are the ones who are distracted by too many things.

**PRAYER**

*"Jesus, now that we're together and my soul is resting on your Heart, fortify me with your grace! (Mother Clelia, Diary)*

