

“WHY ARE YOU IN TEAMS?”

November 1948 editorial

During my last holidays, I went for long walks on my own in the forest. I took St Paul's Epistles with me. Once more, I was moved by the Apostle's unfailing attachment to Christ.

As I read these epistles, you were, dear friends, very present in my meditation and the subject of my next editorial became obvious to me: we must, in Teams, aim at the essential. Exchanges of views, deep friendships, material and spiritual mutual help... all this is not the first objective. THE ESSENTIAL IS TO SEEK CHRIST. Alas! The expression “to seek Christ” is so well-worn, I fear it might awake only a weak echo in you.

But, here are a few texts – or rather – a few heartfelt cries from Saint Paul that will show you what it means to seek Christ and - having found him - to belong to him.

Saint Paul is consumed by charity: *“The love of Christ urges us on”* (2 Cor. 5: 14). *“Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors...”* (Rm 8: 35-37).

As happens to all of us, Saint Paul is sometimes faced with the alternatives: to please people or to please God. He has made up his mind: *“Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ”* (Gal 1: 10). *“We are fools for the sake of Christ”* (1 Cor. 4: 10).

Christ is the magnetic pole of his life. But he does not hesitate to sacrifice the delights of his intimacy with Christ in order to serve his brethren, so that, in their turn, they may belong to his master: *“I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you”* (Ph. 1: 23-24).

He is not spared a variety of sufferings and no doubt he has experienced times of anguish. *“...for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust”* (2 Tm 1: 12). Do you perceive all the heroic courage and tenderness of heart that lie beneath these words? His life has only one aim: he will be faithful to the point of martyrdom: *“For he must reign...”* (1 Cor 15: 25).

No doubt we are far from such holiness. But the question is whether or not we want to be consumed by the same devouring passion and - to come back to Teams - whether it is what we seek in the first place, whether this desire colours our exchanges of views and our prayers and whether it is truly the aim of our friendship and of our mutual help.

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