

Fourth Meditation: What must be done to be true cooperators with Jesus Christ for the salvation of children

First Point

Be convinced of what Saint Paul says, that you plant and water the seed, but it is God through Jesus Christ who makes it grow, and brings your work to fulfillment. So, when it happens that you encounter some difficulty in the guidance of your disciples, when there are some who do not profit from your instructions and you observe a certain spirit of immorality in them, turn to God with confidence. Very insistently ask Jesus Christ to make his Spirit come alive in you, since he has chosen you to do his work.

Consider Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd of the Gospel who seeks the lost sheep, places it upon his shoulders, and carries it back to restore it to the fold. Since you are taking his place, look upon yourself as obliged to do the same thing. Ask him for the grace needed to procure the conversion of their hearts.

You must, then, devote yourself very much to prayer in order to succeed in your ministry. You must constantly represent the needs of your disciples to Jesus Christ, explaining to him the difficulties you have experienced in guiding them. Jesus Christ, seeing that you regard him as the one who can do everything in your work and yourself as an instrument that ought to be moved only by him, will not fail to grant you what you ask of him.

Second Point

Jesus Christ, speaking to his apostles, told them that he gave an example to them that they might do as he himself had done. He also wanted his disciples to accompany him at all the conversions he brought about, so that seeing how he acted, they could, in all they would have to do to win souls to God, be guided and formed by his conduct.

This is also what you must do, since Jesus Christ has chosen you among so many others to be his cooperators in the salvation of souls. In reading the Gospel you must study the manner and the means that he used to lead his disciples

to practice the truths of the Gospel.

Sometimes he proposed as a happiness everything that the world holds in horror, like poverty, injuries, insults, slander, and every kind of persecution for the sake of justice, even telling his disciples that they ought to be glad and rejoice when such things happen to them.

At other times he inspired horror for the sins into which people ordinarily fall, or at other times he proposed virtues to practice, such as gentleness, humility, and the like.

He also made them understand that unless their justice surpassed that of the scribes and Pharisees (who bothered themselves about externals only), they would not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Lastly he wanted the rich and those who have their pleasures in this world to be regarded as unfortunate.

It is according to these practices and all the others of Jesus Christ that you must teach the Christian youth entrusted to you.

Third Point

In carrying out your service to children, you will not fulfill your ministry adequately if you resemble Jesus Christ only in his guidance and In his conversion of souls. You must also enter into his purposes and kits goals. He came on earth, as he himself said, only that people might have life and have it to the full. This is why he said in another place that his words are spirit and life. By this he meant that his words procure the true life, which is the life of the soul, for those who hear them and, with gladness over what they have heard, act on them with love.

This must be your goal when you instruct your disciples, that they live a Christian life and that your words become spirit and life for them. Your words will accomplish this:

1. Because they will be produced by the Spirit of God living in you,
2. Because they will procure for your disciples the Christian spirit.

In possessing this spirit, which is the very Spirit of Jesus Christ they will live that true life which is so valuable to us because it leads surely to eternal life.

Guard against any human attitude toward your disciples; do not pride yourselves over what you do. These two things are capable of spoiling all the good there is in the performance of your duties. What have you in this regard that has not been given to you? And if it has been given to you, why are you boasting as if you had it on your own?

Keep, then, the goals of your work as completely pure as those of Jesus Christ himself; by this means you will draw upon yourselves and all your labors his blessing and grace.