



Dear Parishioners,

Today brings together my family, my colleagues and my friends in a celebration of 45 years of ordained service – service to all of you as my way of serving God. Today I thank you for your presence in my ministry and in my life. Today I also feel the presence of those who have gone before us to meet our God, especially my Mom and Dad. Those who join us today in person and those who join us in spirit bring a sense of warmth and encouragement that fills this church with love.

Love is what God calls forth from us. Love is what I have received in abundance from the day I was born. Love is what I continue to cherish as it is the foundation of my priesthood. And love is what I strive to give, especially to those who do not have it in their lives. As today's Gospel teaches us, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, loves his sheep, "and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice." (Jn. 10:4)

This image of Jesus the Good Shepherd continues to be a guiding principle for me. God has blessed me with more and more territory. Nativity parish has more than doubled in size since I became your pastor. My pasture can now be found across the street and around the world. My flock has become increasingly diverse. But my calling remains simple – to love the Lord, my God, and to love my neighbor. "The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." (Mt. 22:40)

Through these 45 years I have tried to teach, primarily by example, the love of God and love of neighbor. I have been privileged to witness how you, each in your own way, have given and received this love. When I think about our parish outreach to the poor and marginalized, our care of each other in sickness and in loss, our overflowing liturgies, our joyful school, religious education and parish ministries, the support within my own family and circle of friends – all of this and more – 45 years of love - how blessed am I!

As I look to the future, I sometimes chafe at the burden of administration that comes with such a large parish operation. I long for more of the pastoral side of my priesthood. I get so much more fulfillment from counseling those in pain, from serving those in need, from celebrating the beginning of life, the milestones of life, and the transition to eternal life. This shepherd is so much happier with his sheep than with his paperwork!

Despite the distractions of administration, I commit to you, my family, friends, and parishioners, my continuing love and service. May it please God that we continue to welcome all who come to us, and that we continue to serve those who need us. Together, we will forever thank God for the blessings of each other.

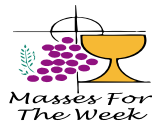
Please accept my sincere and humble gratitude for all you have done to support me in my 45 years of serving God and His people as a priest. To my sister Madeleine, my brother Jack, and your families; to my ordained and religious colleagues; to my dear friends; to my diverse flock, across the street and around the world; may God, the Good Shepherd of us all, bless you and keep you for all the days of your lives. And to Mom, Dad, and all our deceased friends and family, know that we carry you close to our hearts; may God grant you eternal rest.

Have a great week!



## What is the “Easter Duty”?

Also known as the “Eucharistic Precept”, this is the requirement or obligation placed on Catholics to receive Holy Communion at least once each year, during the Easter season. From the sixth century onward, various Church councils enacted legislation requiring reception of Communion at Easter time. This developed as a safeguard against neglect of the Sacrament. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) enacted this as law for the Latin Church. The Council of Trent (1545-63), and the 1917 and 1983 codes of canon law, have kept the requirement but with some minor variations. The 1983 code of canon law specifies the “Easter season” to extend from Palm Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. In the United States, however, this has been extended to include the time from the first Sunday of Lent until Trinity Sunday, which is the first Sunday after Pentecost. Oftentimes, the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is associated with the “Easter duty”. While the basic law of the Church requires that one receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year if one is in the state of serious sin, it is not considered a part of the Easter duty.



### Monday, May 16

Edith Edgar 7:30am Fr. Martin

### Tuesday, May 17

Mother’s Day Novena 7:30am Fr. Martin

### Wednesday, May 18

Special Intention for Madeleine Marchesseault 7:30am Fr. Martin

### Thursday, May 19

Mother’s Day Novena 7:30am Fr. Korpi

### Friday, May 20

Henry Nazar 7:30am Fr. Korpi

### Saturday, May 21

Mother’s Day Novena 9:00am Fr. Korpi  
 Dr. & Mrs. Hunter Robinette 5:00pm Fr. Korpi  
 Hispanic Mass 7:00pm Fr. Wilson

### Sunday, May 22

W. Lamar Bomar, Sr. 7:30am Fr. Korpi  
 Therese VonSchaumburg 9:00am Fr. Wilson  
 Frank Schultz 11:00am Fr. Korpi  
 Thomas Daley 12:45pm Fr. Wilson

Last Sunday’s Altar Flowers in Memory of Theresa Coursey and Josephine McDaniel were donated by Jim and Michelle McDaniel. (I apologize for the oversight. Bulletin Editor)

### Thought for the Week:

Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside them was superior to circumstances.

Bruce Barton

### Parish Prayer List

**Please remember, in your prayers, the sick of our Parish Community:**

**Elaine Bitton, Frank Bott, Dot Bradshaw, Mary Perri Crawford, Elaine David, Bob Gabrielli Oscar Cordon Garcia, Michael O’Neill, Julio Ramos and Ann Marie Rondeau**

**For the deceased:**

**Patricia Eisenhardt, Mother of Elizabeth McCauley William Lowry, Husband of Patricia Lowry and Ferdinand Rey**

**Pray for our military men and women and their families. May God keep them safe and out of harm’s way.**

The Altar Flowers this week are

In Loving Memory of  
 Josephine Marie Bean  
 From  
 The Bean Family



### **MOTHER’S DAY NOVENA**



A Novena of nine Masses will be said during the month of May for Mothers, living and deceased. The Novena Masses will be said at **9:00 am on May 21st & 30th**. The remainder of the Novena Masses will be at 7:30am on **May 17th, 19th, 25th and 27th**.

### **ADVERTISER OF THE WEEK**

**BJ Pool and Spa  
 703-323-1333**



## CONGRATULATIONS FATHER MARTIN

**YOUR PARISHIONERS JOIN YOU IN CELEBRATING YOUR 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!**

**WE THANK GOD FOR THE BLESSINGS OF YOUR PRIESTHOOD – 45 YEARS OF SERVICE AND LOVE FOR ALL. YOU ARE THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF EVERYONE WHO COMES TO YOU, FROM ACROSS THE STREET AND AROUND THE WORLD. MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU, ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE.**

**NATIVITY'S FOOD PANTRY** is running dry. Please help fill our pantry with nonperishable foods so that we can help those in need. Thank you.

**Catholic Charities' Migration and Refugee Services Seeking Bed Donations**

Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) needs donated beds for newly arriving refugees. All donations are tax-deductible and pick-up is available. For more information, please call Lydia at (703) 841-3868.

**PRO-LIFE CORNER**



The "choice" of having an abortion is a costly one to the mother and to the baby. The physical and emotional scars on a woman caused by abortion can, and often do, last a lifetime. Nothing will ever bring that baby back to life again. Abortion is forever. Pray for all who have had an abortion that they may find God's healing love.

Are you suffering from an abortion experience? **PROJECT RACHEL** offers spiritual and psychological healing. Call 703-276-0373 ([projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org)) for a referral for private, sensitive and confidential counseling and/or reconciliation. (Project Rachel is a post-abortion healing program open to all and sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Arlington).

**Pro-Life Rosary and Witness** - Nativity Parishioners are invited to pray for both an end to abortion and healing for those suffering from abortion at NOVA "Healthcare", 10400 Eaton Place, Fairfax, VA 22030, from 7:30 - 8:30 AM on Saturday mornings. This is the busiest hour of an active abortion clinic; it is not uncommon for over 10 women/couples to arrive during this time. Peacefully pray for Our Lady's intercessions and lovingly encourage calls to the numbers below. For more info, please contact Josh Reynolds, 703-470-8978, [josh.reynolds.01@gmail.com](mailto:josh.reynolds.01@gmail.com)

**24-Hour Crisis Pregnancy Hotline: 1-800-395-HELP (4357)**

**Project Rachel (healing after abortion): 1-888-456-HOPE (4673)**

**Pregnancy Resource Centers Phone Numbers:**

- Catholic Charities National: 1-800-CARE-002
- Catholic Charities Local: 703-425-0100
- A Woman's Choice: 703-538-4305
- Gabriel Project: 1-866-444-3553

**THE WEEK AHEAD  
IN OUR PARISH**

**Sunday, May 15**

12:00 pm.....Fr. Martin's 45th Anniv. Reception (PH)  
2:00, 4:00 & 6:00 pm .....CCD Classes (S)

**Monday, May 16**

9:30 am.....Prayer Shawl (APR)  
4:00 & 7:00 pm.....CCD Classes (S)  
8:00 pm.....AA Meeting (APR)

**Tuesday, May 17**

9:30 am.....Bible Study (APR)  
4:30 & 7:00 pm.....CCD Classes (S)  
7:30 pm.....Legion of Mary (APR)  
7:30 pm.....Knights of Columbus (PH)

**Wednesday, May 18**

10:00 am.....Mom & Me (APR)  
7:00 pm.....Prayer Shawl (APR)  
7:00 pm.....Hispanic Prayer Group (SC)  
7:00 pm.....ESL (Room 5)  
7:30 pm.....Youth Choir (CH)

**Thursday, May 19**

9:30 am.....Craft Group (APR)  
7:00 pm.....ESL (Room 5)  
7:30 pm.....Adult Choir (CH)  
7:30 pm.....Prayer Group (APR)  
7:30 pm.....Grief Support (S)

**Saturday, May 21**

9:30 am.....Pro Life Rosary (CH)  
10:00 am.....Dog Obedience (PL)  
10:00 pm.....ESL (Room 5, 6, 7, 8)  
1:00 am.....Hispanic Baptisms (SH)  
5:00 pm.....Hispanic CYO (Room 4)  
5:00 pm.....Hispanic CCD (S)

**MEMORIAL DAY MASS**

At 11:00 am on Monday, May 30, 2011, Holy Mass will be celebrated at Fairfax Memorial Park, formerly Calvary Cemetery, 9900 Braddock Road, Fairfax, by Rev. Terry Specht. If outdoor services at the Cemetery are cancelled due to inclement weather, Father Specht will offer an 11:00 am Mass at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 8800 Braddock Road, Annandale, VA 23003.



## OUTSIDE THE PARISH

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus tells us that He came so that we might have life more abundantly. Don't settle for a just and average marriage; receive the abundance that Christ has promised. Allow Him to raise your marriage from the ordinary to the extraordinary! Make the time to deepen your communication, strengthen your relationship, rekindle your romance and renew your sacrament by attending the next local **Worldwide Marriage Encounter** Weekend Sept 16-18 in Herndon, Sept. 23-25 in Rockville, MD or June 3-5 in Richmond. It's best to register promptly to ensure you don't miss this opportunity. For more information call Mark and Cathy Stangler (703)378-4150 or visit <http://wwme-nova.org>.

**From the Office of Vocations...**

On this Good Shepherd Sunday we celebrate the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life, especially for our diocese, that God will raise up good shepherds in our midst. If you think God is calling you to serve the Church as a priest or in the consecrated life, call Father Brian Bashista at (703) 841-2514, or write: [b.bashista@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:b.bashista@arlingtondiocese.org)

You are invited to a **Eucharistic Holy Hour** sponsored by the Arlington Division of the World Apostolate of Fatima on Sunday, May 22, from 3:00 – 4:00 P.M. at St. Thomas a Becket Catholic Church, 1421 Wiehle Ave., Reston. At Fatima, Our Lady asked for prayer and sacrifice for the conversion of sinners, peace in the world, and an increase in vocations; we hope you will join us in prayer.

## SUMMER CAMPS

**BISHOP IRETON HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER CAMPS**

Bishop Ireton High School announces it's 2011 summer camp offerings at its Alexandria campus. The variety of camps includes theater, basketball, soccer, football, baseball, lacrosse and crew. For a brochure and a registration form please email [hamerp@bishopireton.org](mailto:hamerp@bishopireton.org) or call (703)212-5190.

**RETREAT FOR WOMEN**

Treat yourself to a weekend at Dominican Retreat in McLean, VA, June 3 --5, to experience God's peace and presence. Our theme this year in "Make Your Home in Me As I Make Mine in You" (John 15:4) Retreat director Fr. Greg Salomone, OP, is pastor of St. Dominic's in Washington. His presentations are grounded in scripture and real life. For reservations or information call Dottie Rossi at [703-451-0138](tel:703-451-0138) or Dominican Retreat at [703-356-4243](tel:703-356-4243), or see [www.dominicanretreat.org](http://www.dominicanretreat.org)

**Catholic Charities Looking for Volunteer Daytime Receptionists**

With so many looking to the Church for assistance during this difficult time, our phone lines at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington are busier than ever. Do you have a few daytime hours to spare during the week to help us get vital information to the people who need it most? Consider volunteering as a receptionist at our 200 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, Virginia offices. For more information contact Beth Fitzpatrick at (703) 841- 3835 or email her at [bfitz@ccda.net](mailto:bfitz@ccda.net).

**CAMP ST. CHARLES-Boys & Girls Catholic Over-night Summer Camp - Open House - May 22, 11am to 4pm**

Drop in during our Open House to see how your children, boys and girls, can experience two fun filled weeks at Camp St. Charles for a reasonable price and it's close by. Each summer children have been making friends, learning to work together and developing an appreciation for Creation while camping out, riding horses, working their way through a challenge course, trying archery, petting snakes, making ceramics and lots of other activities in beautiful Southern Maryland. Fully Accredited with the American Camp Association and certified by the State of Maryland, Camp St. Charles has been run by the Salvatorian Fathers and Brothers and Lay Salvatorians for over 57 years. Camp is located two hours from Baltimore, Northern Virginia and Washington, DC. We also offer a "dry run" weekend called the Parent-Child Weekend and a volunteer weekend. Please join us. For more information and directions, see our website: [www.campstcharles.com](http://www.campstcharles.com) or call us at 301-934-8799.

**PRAY THE ROSARY FOR WORLD PEACE****Warm Weather Clothing Donations Needed**

The Catholic Charities Thrift Store is in urgent need of spring and summer clothing donations. In the heart of Old Town Alexandria, the Catholic Charities Thrift Shop provides clothing and other items at no charge to those in need, and sells items inexpensively to help the poor. Conveniently located at 131 South West Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, the Thrift Shop is open every day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information call shop manager Ms. Ana Gutierrez at (703) 548-4881.



## OPERATION STARFISH® NEWS

[www.operation-starfish.org](http://www.operation-starfish.org)

### 2011 Campaign a huge success

Any day now Fr. Martin will let us know the results of this year's Operation Starfish in a personal thank you to the parish. Watch for his announcement soon! Suffice it to say that we are well on our way to developing the 7<sup>th</sup> "Nativity Village" in Haiti.

Thanks to our compassionate and generous parishioners, many lives will be changed by access to clean water, sanitation, safe shelter, health care, education, job training and small business opportunities. An entire village will have new hope for their future, because of what we have done.

Fr. Duken Augustin, working with Food For The Poor, Inc., has obtained a 20-acre parcel of land near Cap-Haitien and he will begin building houses as soon as our funding arrives. Many more families will be moved out of the Shada slum this year.

When Fr. Martin first visited this destitute area along the Cap-Haitien Canal, he met a young man who spoke little English. This man and his wife were expecting their first child and they were living in a scrap metal shed. You could see the fear in this man when he talked about bringing a new life into the world of contamination around him. You could sense his frustration at not being able to find enough work to give his wife and baby a decent life. Fr. Martin promised this man that Nativity Parish would make a difference for him and for as many other families as possible.

Today we are making a difference in the Shada slum. In 2010 we moved 50 families out of Shada and into Nativity Village at Chastenoye. In 2011 we will move many more families out of danger. And the good news is that several other churches, schools and individuals have joined in this effort. Together, we are making a big difference in the lives of the poor.

As we celebrate Fr. Martin's 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary this week, we can be very thankful for a pastor who has brought the Gospel to life through Operation Starfish®. One at a time, we can make a difference in the lives of others. One at a time, we can be Christ's hands and feet for each other. One at a time, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Mt 22:39

### TWO WORDS: "THE YARD SALE IS COMING!"



During your annual spring clean-up and before tossing out your former "treasures", please consider storing them in a corner of your garage or basement for donation to the Yard Sale.

Nativity's Annual Yard Sale for Charity sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Father Vincent S. Sikora Council 7992, is Saturday, July 23, 2011, from 9 AM until 3 PM. Collections will begin Thursday, July 14, 2011 and continue through Thursday July 21, 2011. Your donations are tax-deductible and appreciated.

**SHARING HOPE**, a support group for me and women going through separation and divorce, will meet this Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, at St. Mary of Sorrows Historic Church Hall, off Rte 123. The topic will be "**Insights That Changed My Life**". Newcomers are warmly welcomed and there is no fee. For further information, directions or encouragement, please call Barbara at 703-425-5467 or Maureen 703-978-6318.



**Final Religious Education classes** — Sunday, May 15; Monday, May 16; and Tuesday, May 17. Report cards will be distributed.

A big **THANK YOU** to the Religious Education Program's students, their families, and our volunteers for participating in the Program's effort to support the parish's Operation Starfish Lenten Project. Due to the enthusiastic support, the Religious Education Program collected \$4,835.21!! This generous donation will help 40 children in Haiti receive an education for a better future.

**Student Registration for 2011-2012 is now open.** Session assignments are based on first-come, first-served basis – register early to increase the chance of getting the time slot you need! Forms are available in the Religious Education Office, on the community board in the church vestibule, and at website: [www.edu.nativityburke.org](http://www.edu.nativityburke.org); on the Nativity CCD tab click on Student Registration.

## PREOCUPADO POR NOSOTROS

4º Pascua ©  
Javier Leoz



Se agradece, y hasta es causa de seguridad personal, el hecho de que otras personas se preocupen de nosotros, sigan con cariño y con especial atención el curso de nuestra vida o, simplemente, nos alerten de las contradicciones y pruebas que pueden aparecer en el horizonte de nuestra felicidad. ¿Tienes un amigo? ¡Guárdalo! ¿Hace algo por ti? ¡Dale las gracias!

1. La figura del Buen Pastor, en este cuarto domingo de Pascua, expresa muy a las claras el alma interna de Jesús: vela por nosotros y sale con prontitud en los caminos por donde avanzamos, pensamos, nos realizamos....o tropezamos.

¿Que estamos heridos? Siempre tiene una palabra sanadora que infunde salud y fortaleza

¿Que nos encontramos abatidos? Nos habla con palabras de esperanza y valentía

¿Que caemos en la decepción o en la tristeza? Se acerca y se convierte en motivo de alegría y de confianza.

Jesús no es alguien que se desentiende de nosotros. Vive a nuestro lado y, además, es bálsamo en multitud de ocasiones en las que nos sentimos perdidos, agobiados, despistados o con hambre de otros alimentos que no sean los del mundo.

2. La figura del Buen Pastor, en este tiempo de Pascua, nos advierte de igual manera de los falsos pastores. De otras puertas que nos abren valles teñidos de falsas felicidades, de palabras superficiales y de caprichos a la carta. Son muchos de nuestros dirigentes que, constituyéndose en voz del pueblo, rompen y rasgan con valores que han entretejido y dinamizado nuestra cultura, nuestra forma de ser y que nos dejan sumidos en la inseguridad y en el fracaso, en el hastío y en la desesperanza. Son aquellos que quieren un mundo sin Dios y sin más referencia que el hombre por el hombre. También, de esos “falsos pastores” nos alerta y previene el Señor.

La diferencia entre Jesús y los falsos pastores es que, a Jesús, le interesan todas las ovejas, todas las personas. Para El no existen colores, ideologías ni partidos. Para el Señor existen las almas. Y, las almas, sólo tienen un color: la fe.

En un mundo tan desgajado y enfrentado por diferentes tendencias, se agradece la Palabra de un Jesús que sale al paso del hombre por lo que es (por ser hombre) y no por lo que piensa (por el matiz de su pensamiento).

En una sociedad tan resquebrajada y mediatizada por lo que nos divide, en la fiesta del Buen Pastor, tenemos un gran reto: unirnos en torno a Aquel que nos hermana y nos ama. Ojala seamos capaces de reconocer a Jesús como aquel Pastor que es capaz de llevarnos por los caminos de la concordia. Aquel que da la vida, a través de su Iglesia, sus sacerdotes y personas comprometidas en la evangelización, en favor de toda la humanidad. Un Jesús que, desde el día de nuestro Bautismo, nos conoce, nos ama y para el que—nuestra historia— no le es indiferente y que, por lo tanto, hemos de corresponderle desde nuestro compromiso activo de buscar y trabajar por la unidad de todos aquellos que nos decimos cristianos. El, como Buen Pastor, va por delante.

## ¡ABRE TU PUERTA, QUE TE ESCUCHO!

Creo en Ti, espero en Ti  
y quiero entrar por Ti y contigo en el Valle  
Celestial

Tu, Señor, eres Buen Pastor  
tu mano me indica los caminos a seguir  
tus ojos se fijan en los míos  
cuando me siento débil y enfermo.

Si me lanzo hacia el abismo, me socorres  
Si me equivoco de senda, reconduces mis pasos  
Creo en Ti y espero en Ti.

Tu presencia, es báculo que me da seguridad  
Tu Palabra, es aliento y consejo certero  
que empuja mi pensamiento y mi decisión  
Tu huella, de Buen Pastor,  
es guía que me compromete a vivir unido a Ti  
y a trabajar por tu Reino.

Tu cayado, siempre firme y eterno,  
es apoyo que necesito cada día que avanzo.  
En la falsedad, me hace optar por la verdad

En la incredulidad, me sumerge en la fe  
En la tibieza, me aporta fortaleza

En la oscuridad, me arroja hacia la luz  
¡Abre tu puerta, Señor, que voy contigo!

Que te escucho, porque eres Pastor  
Pastor que amas y te entregas por amor  
Pastor que conoces, y llamas con amor  
Pastor que alimentas, y lo haces por amor  
Pastor que aguardas, y esperas con amor  
Pastor que hablas, y das en el corazón.

¡ERES MI BUEN PASTOR, SEÑOR!  
¡ABRE TU PUERTA Y ENTRO CONTIGO!

Javier Leoz

La Despensa de Alimentos de Nativida esta agotada!!  
Le pedimos su ayuda a llenar con alimentos no perecederos para poder ayudar a los mas necesitados.

**Iglesia de la Natividad 6400 Nativity Lane  
Burke, VA 22015 Teléfono 703-455-2400**

**Rev. Cedric Wilson**

**SANTA MISA EN ESPAÑOL: Todos los sábados a las  
7:00pm**

**CONFESIONES: Los sábados antes de la Santa Misa de  
6:15pm a 6:55pm**



### Aprende tu fe...

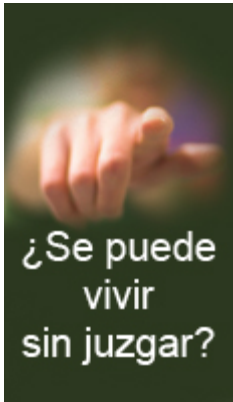
#### ¿Se puede vivir sin juzgar?

*Autor: P. Raniero Cantalamessa, ofmcap*

Cuando se habla de la caridad en los escritos apostólicos, no se habla de ella nunca en abstracto, de modo genérico. El trasfondo es siempre la edificación de la comunidad cristiana. En otras palabras, el primer ámbito de ejercicio de la caridad debe ser la Iglesia, y más concretamente aún la comunidad en la que se vive, las personas con las que se mantienen relaciones cotidianas. Así debe suceder también hoy, en particular en el corazón de la Iglesia, entre aquellos que trabajan en estrecho contacto con el Sumo Pontífice.

Durante un cierto tiempo en la antigüedad se quiso designar con el término caridad, agape, no sólo la comida fraterna que los cristianos tomaban juntos, sino también a toda la Iglesia[1]. El mártir san Ignacio de Antioquía saluda a la Iglesia de Roma como la que “preside en la caridad (agape)”, es decir, en la “fraternidad cristiana”, el conjunto de todas las iglesias[2]. Esta frase no afirma sólo el hecho del primado, sino también su naturaleza, o el modo de ejercerlo: es decir, en la caridad.

La Iglesia tiene necesidad urgente de una llamada de caridad que cure sus fracturas. En un discurso suyo, Pablo VI decía: “La Iglesia necesita sentir refluir por todas sus facultades humanas la ola del amor, de ese amor que sellama caridad, y que precisamente ha sido difundida en nuestros corazones precisamente por el Espíritu Santo que se nos ha dado”[3]. Sólo el amor cura. Es el óleo del samaritano. Oleo también porque debe flotar



por encima de todo, como hace precisamente el aceite respecto a los líquidos. “Que por encima de todo esté la caridad, que es el vínculo de la perfección” (Col 3, 14). Por encima de todo, super omnia! Por tanto también de la fe y de la esperanza, de la disciplina, de la autoridad, aunque, evidentemente, la propia disciplina y autoridad puede ser una expresión de la caridad. No hay unidad sin la caridad y, si la hubiese, sería sólo una unidad de poco valor para Dios.

Un ámbito importante sobre el que trabajar es el de los juicios recíprocos. Pablo escribía a los Romanos: “Entonces, ¿Con qué derecho juzgas a tu hermano? ¿Por qué lo desprecias? ... Dejemos entonces de juzgarnos mutuamente” (Rm 14, 10.13). Antes de él Jesús había dicho: “No juzguéis y no seréis juzgados [...] ¿Por qué te fijas en la paja que está en el ojo de tu hermano y no adviertes la viga que está en el tuyo?” (Mt 7, 1-3). Compara el pecado del prójimo (el pecado juzgado), cualquiera que sea, con una pajita, frente al pecado de quien juzga (el pecado de juzgar) que es una viga. La viga es el hecho mismo de juzgar, tan grave es eso a los ojos de Dios.

El discurso sobre los juicios es ciertamente delicado y complejo y no se puede dejar a medias, sin que aparezca en seguida poco realista. ¿Cómo se puede, de hecho, vivir del todo sin juzgar? El juicio está dentro de nosotros incluso en una mirada. No podemos observar, escuchar, vivir, sin dar valoraciones, es decir, sin juzgar. Un padre, un superior, un confesor, un juez, quien tenga una responsabilidad sobre los demás, debe juzgar. Es más, a veces, como es el caso de muchos aquí en la Curia, el juzgar es, precisamente, el tipo de servicio que uno está llamado a prestar a la sociedad o a la Iglesia.

De hecho, no es tanto el juicio el que se debe quitar de nuestro corazón, ¡sino más bien el veneno de nuestro juicio! Es decir, el hastío, la condena. En el relato de Lucas, el mandato de Jesús: “No juzguéis y no seréis juzgados” es seguido inmediatamente, como para explicar el sentido de estas palabras, por el mandato: “No condenéis y no seréis condenados” (Lc 6, 37). De por sí, el juzgar es una acción neutral, el juicio puede terminar tanto en condena como en absolución y justificación. Son los prejuicios negativos los que son recogidos y prohibidos por la palabra de Dios, los que junto con el pecado condenan también al pecador, los que miran más al castigo que a la corrección del hermano.

Otro punto cualificador de la caridad sincera es la estima: “competid en estimaros mutuamente” (Rm 12, 10). Para estimar al hermano, es necesario no estimarse uno mismo demasiado; es necesario – dice el Apóstol – “no hacerse una idea demasiado alta de sí mismos” (Rm 12, 3). Quien tiene una idea demasiado alta de sí mismo es como un hombre que, de noche, tiene ante los ojos una fuente de luz intensa: no consigue ver otra cosa más allá de ella; no consigue ver las luces de los hermanos, sus virtudes y sus valores.

“Minimizar” debe ser nuestro verbo preferido, en las relaciones con los demás: minimizar nuestras virtudes y los defectos de los demás. ¡No minimizar nuestros defectos y las virtudes de los demás, como en cambio hacemos a menudo, que es la cosa diametralmente opuesta! Hay una fábula de Esopo al respecto; en la reelaboración que hace de ella La Fontaine suena así:

“Cuando viene a este valle cada uno lleva encima una doble alforja. Dentro de la parte de delante de buen grado todos echamos los defectos ajenos, y en la de atrás, los propios”[4].

Deberíamos sencillamente dar la vuelta a las cosas: poner nuestros defectos en la parte de delante y los defectos ajenos en la de detrás. Santiago advierte: “No habléis mal unos de otros” (St 4,11). El chisme ha cambiado de nombre, se llama comentario [gossip, n.d.t.] y parece haberse convertido en algo inocente, en cambio es una de las cosas que más contaminan el vivir juntos. No basta con no hablar mal de los demás; es necesario además impedir que otros lo hagan en nuestra presencia, hacerles entender, quizás silenciosamente, que no se está de acuerdo. ¡Qué aire distinto se respira en un ambiente de trabajo y en una comunidad cuando se toma en serio la advertencia de Santiago! En muchos locales públicos una vez se ponía: “Aquí no se fuma”, o también, “Aquí no se blasfema”. No estaría mal sustituirlas, en algunos casos, con el escrito: “¡Aquí no se hacen chismes!”

Terminemos escuchando como dirigida a nosotros la exhortación del Apóstol a la comunidad de Filipos, tan querida por él: “Os ruego que hagáis perfecta mi alegría, permaneciendo bien unidos. Tened un mismo amor, un mismo corazón, un mismo pensamiento. No hagáis nada por espíritu de discordia o de vanidad, y que la humildad os lleve a estimar a los otros como superiores a vosotros mismos. Que cada uno busque no solamente su propio interés, sino también el de los demás” (Fil 2, 2-5).