

Christ and, mirroring us in him, we see precisely the difference. Precisely in this consists the examination of conscience, and we see what is missing to get to Jesus, to be perfect as He is.



Life

To the Divine Master (DF 39)

Master: your life traces the way for me; your doctrine confirms and illuminates my steps; your grace sustains me and supports me on the way to heaven. You are perfect Master: to lead by example, to teach and comfort the disciple to follow you. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him may not perish, but may have eternal life" (Gv 3:16). "You have come from God to teach us."

O Master, you have words of eternal life: replace my mind, my thoughts, with Yourself, or You who enlighten every man and are truth itself: I do not want to reason except as You teach, nor judge except according to your judgments, nor think except about You the substantial truth, given by the Father to me: "Live in my mind, O Jesus the Truth."

Ps 119 (10-18)

¹⁰ I seek you with all my heart; let me not stray from your commands.

¹¹ In my heart I have kept your word that I may not sin against my Lord.

¹² Praise be to You, O God; instruct me in your statutes,

¹³ that with my lips I may declare all your spoken decrees.

¹⁴ I delight in following your laws, more so than in all riches.

¹⁵ I will meditate on your precepts, and concentrate on your ways.

¹⁶ In your laws I will rejoice and will not neglect your words.

¹⁷ Be kind to your servant that I may live to follow your word.

¹⁸ Open my eyes that I may see the marvellous truths in your law.

RELIGIOUS MENTALITY

We live and work in a world that we want to transform with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the process of communication we open ourselves up to the people of modernity to shape the human community with them and together build the Kingdom of God on earth. However, we must not forget that, by addressing the world, we are also getting trained. Acceptance of the "worldly mentality" will make us lose our freshness and apostolic credibility. Change in the way we think, therefore, cannot mean giving up the evangelical mentality, but must guarantee an ever more total fidelity to Christ and his Gospel.

Truth

■ *Listening to the Word of the Apostle Paul*

The wisdom of the cross preached by St. Paul is against the logic of the world. However, the cross invariably remains for us a reference point and a source of "God's power and wisdom."

From the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1:18-25; 3:18-20)

The language of the cross remains nonsense for those who are being lost. Yet for those who are being saved, it is the power of God, as Scripture says: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and I will demolish the reasoning of the learned. Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world? At first God spoke the language of wisdom, and the world did not know God through wisdom. Then God thought of saving believers with the foolishness that we preach. The Jews ask for miracles and the Greeks for higher knowledge, while we proclaim a crucified Messiah. For the Jews, what a great scandal and for the Greeks, what nonsense! But he is Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God for those called by God among both Jews and Greeks...

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone of you considers himself wise in the ways of the world, let him become a fool, so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's eyes. To this Scripture says: *God catches the wise in their cunning*. It also says: The Lord knows that the reasoning of the wise, that it is useless.

■ ■ Listening to the Word of the Magisterium

The way of thinking is expressed in human decisions and actions. They shape our faith and belonging to Christ in the Church. The world needs conscious and credible witnesses of the Gospel who can build a culture of life, encounter and love.

From the encyclical "*Veritatis splendor*" (No. 88)

The attempt to set freedom in opposition to truth, and indeed to separate them radically, is the consequence, manifestation and consummation of *another more serious and destructive dichotomy, that which separates faith from morality.*

This separation represents one of the most acute pastoral concerns of the Church amid today's growing secularism, wherein many, indeed too many, people think and live "as if God did not exist". We are speaking of a mentality which affects, often in a profound, extensive and all-embracing way, even the attitudes and behaviour of Christians, whose faith is weakened and loses its character as a new and original criterion for thinking and acting in personal, family and social life. In a widely dechristianized culture, the criteria employed by believers themselves in making judgments and decisions often appear extraneous or even contrary to those of the Gospel. [...]

It is urgent to rediscover and to set forth once more the authentic reality of the Christian faith, which is not simply a set of propositions to be accepted with intellectual assent. Rather, faith is a lived knowledge of Christ, a living remembrance of his commandments, and a *truth to be lived out*. A word, in any event, is not truly received until it passes into action, until it is put into practice. Faith is a decision involving one's whole existence. It is an encounter, a dialogue, a communion of love and of life between the believer and Jesus Christ, the Way, and the Truth, and the Life (cf. *Jn 14:6*). It entails an act of trusting abandonment to Christ, which enables us to live as he lived (cf. *Gal 2:20*), in profound love of God and of our brothers and sisters.

■ ■ ■ Listening to the Founder's Word

"The Religious Lives the Religious Faith," the Founder wrote. Contemporariness and modernity cannot 'disturb' this faith present in us. That is why we remember the three principles indicated by Don Alberione which build the "religious mentality".

From the volume "*We Live in Christ Jesus*" (pp. 22-23, 25)

I mean that the religious has a special mind. [...] What are the principles that form his mentality, his special faith? The special principles of religious life that

form the mentality, which form the principles of supernatural, religious reasoning, are these: *First*: the religious state is a state of greater perfection; it is a state of perfection: "If you want to be perfect" (Mt 19:21). So all the consequences depend on it. So: I want to be perfect, there is little to say, I want to desire it, I want to embrace this state: if I want it, I am religious, if I do not want it, I am not. It is perfection that one acquires precisely with the practice of perfect obedience, chastity and poverty. *Second*, it is mortification. And if the other states, the Christian and the priestly, go up to a certain point of mortification, the religious state goes further ahead and not only detaches itself from the fruits, but even from the plant, that is, from the fruits of his labour and also from the freedom to dispose of certain things: the religious goes much beyond.

Third, it is a state of predilection: that is, a state in which you have special graces on earth and a special place in heaven. These are the three principles of faith that concern religious life. [...] The philosophical mentality helps us to think in philosophy; the Christian, Catholic mentality helps us to reason in theology, that is, to develop Principles, Christian Ideas; and the religious mentality helps us to reason and develop the principles of religious life.

Way

Is your religious life characterized by freshness and enthusiasm? Check whether your personal relationship with Jesus has grown old in the wrong way: instead of being warm and mature it has become cold and repetitive.

From the volume "*We Live in Christ Jesus*" (pp. 58-59)

Children, having been called by Jesus to his love, to his life, and to that great prize, take courage! We feel we have so many temptations, so many passions and base motives: sometimes it takes little to get confused, right? A dark spectacle, or pointed shoes... Oh, poor children! "How long, men, will you be hard-hearted? Why do you love vain things and seek lies" (Ps 4:3)? You are called to divine life, and do you get lost behind a shoe? Oh, little children, you are called to religious life! So stand up boldly, follow Jesus, not with melancholy and sadness; not by scaring yourself of the cross and the sacrifice, as that young man did, but with courage, with strength, with perseverance, until you can follow God entirely. [...] Then it is not enough; the supreme exemplary, the perfect religious, is Jesus Christ, and in the second part of the Visit, with the examination of conscience, study the model, our perfect mirror Jesus