ENCOUNTER 04

Tested

Christ matures my heart in trial

04

PASTORAL PRINCIPLE

Whoever has been accompanied in their own detours learns to sustain processes without letting go of either the person or the mission.

Starting point

There is no apostolic life without limits.

There is fatigue.

Failure.

Rejection.

Confusion.

People who do not respond as we expected.

Moments when we would like to go around the hill.

Trial can destroy or it can bring to maturity.

Much depends on how we go through it and who walks with us.

The Word and the faith of the Church

> “We hold this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor 4:7).

> “I have prayed that your own faith may not fail” (Lk 22:32).

Hope sustains the believer in difficulty, and Christ can unite our trials to his Paschal mystery. “There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle” (CCC 2015): trial, too, is part of the way of perfection.

IN ME · Trial can also form us

Not all suffering is good.

Not all fatigue should be endured.

There are wounds that need care, injustices that must be corrected and situations that call for asking for help.

But there is also the difficulty that comes with remaining faithful.

Not controlling the fruit.

Accepting limits.

Recognizing that we are the vessels and not the treasure.

Peter was formed through his fall as well.

After discovering his own poverty, he could look on the frailty of others differently.

Whoever has been sustained learns to sustain others.

MIRROR OF TEPEYAC

Juan Diego has a problem the mission had not foreseen.

His uncle is gravely ill.

He is in a hurry.

He changes his route.

He goes around the hill.

And there something extraordinarily revealing happens:

Mary comes out to meet him on his detour.

She does not begin by reproaching him.

She asks him what is happening.

She listens to the reason for his route.

She comforts him.

She clarifies the situation.

And then she sends him back on mission.

The difficulty does not end the relationship.

It becomes part of his formation.

WITH OTHERS · Accompanying the journey

People do not grow in a straight line either.

They get tired.

They fall behind.

They get frightened.

They fail.

They have problems our programs had not foreseen.

The formator can simply conclude:

> “They did not follow through.”

Or can ask:

> “What happened along their way?”

Accompanying does not mean excusing everything.

Mary sends Juan Diego out again.

But she does not sacrifice the person to save the program.

She unites care and mission.

Listening and responsibility.

Patience and clarity.

For conversation

- What trial is maturing my heart right now?
- What difficulty should I accept, and which one do I need to address or correct?
- How do I react to someone who fails?
- Do I know how to ask what happened before judging the result?

This Week

Inner step

Hand over a concrete difficulty to Christ:

> “Make this trial a place of trust and growth.”

Missionary step

Look for someone who has fallen behind, drifted away or failed at something.

Ask them first:

> “What happened?”

Listen.

Then agree together on one single possible next step.

Expected fruit

To learn a way of accompanying that can sustain both the person and their growth at the same time.