ENCOUNTER 06

Compassionate

06

Christ loves my brother and sister in me

PASTORAL PRINCIPLE

Whoever has been lifted up by mercy learns to serve in such a way that the other can also stand up.

Starting point

Christian charity is not only a matter of feeling compassion.

Christ wants to extend his love through our time, our hands, our listening and our decisions.

The Word and the faith of the Church

> “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

> “Let us love in deed and in truth” (1 Jn 3:18).

Charity leads us to love our neighbor concretely, with special closeness to those who suffer and are poor. The Catechism calls works of mercy the actions by which “we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities” (CCC 2447).

IN ME · Asking for the sentiments of Christ

Mercy begins by transforming the way we look.

I no longer see only a problem.

I see a person.

I do not see only a lack.

I see a brother or sister with a history, dignity, gifts and possibilities.

That leads to concrete actions: listening, visiting, accompanying, defending when necessary.

But how we help also matters.

We can do good while unintentionally keeping the other person always beneath us.

Or we can help in such a way that they rediscover their ability to stand on their own feet.

MIRROR OF TEPEYAC

Juan Bernardino is sick.

Worry for him has led Juan Diego to change his route.

Mary does not respond by saying that the religious mission is more important than that human need.

She also attends to Juan Bernardino.

She heals him.

She comforts him.

And the man who needed help also receives a word and becomes a witness to what happened.

Tepeyac does not set evangelization and mercy against each other.

Compassion enters the very heart of the mission.

WITH OTHERS · Serving by lifting up

There are moments when we simply have to give: food, medicine, time, protection.

But whenever possible, Christian mercy takes one more step.

It asks:

What does this person think?

What can they decide?

What do they know how to do?

What can they contribute?

What responsibility can they take on?

A person in need does not stop having gifts because they are going through a time of need.

Serving well means helping without taking over the other person’s life.

For conversation

- Whom is Christ inviting me to love concretely?
- Whom are we seeing only through their need?
- Does our help also generate participation and responsibility?
- What gifts have we failed to discover in the people we serve?

This Week

Inner step

In front of a particular person:

> “Jesus, teach me to see them with your eyes.”

Missionary step

Carry out a concrete act of service and add a question:

> “What do you need?”

and, when appropriate:

> “How could you take part?”

Do with the person everything that can reasonably be done with them, and not only for them.

Expected fruit

To learn a mercy that helps without diminishing, and that recognizes in the person in need a brother or sister who is also able to offer something.