ENCOUNTER 07

Fruitful

07

Christ’s life in me gives life to others

PASTORAL PRINCIPLE

Entrusting a real mission to another means accepting, at the same time, that we become less indispensable.

Starting point

There comes a moment when the apostle’s question changes.

At first he asks:

What can I do?

Then he begins to ask:

Whom can I help to grow?

Mission matures when the life received begins to give life to others.

The Word and the faith of the Church

> “Feed my sheep” (Jn 21:17).

> “For building up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12).

The gifts we receive are for building up the Church, and true apostolate springs from union with Christ. “Through Baptism and Confirmation we are all called to be responsible for the mission Jesus entrusted to us” (PGP 79).

IN ME · No longer being indispensable

Forming others requires a quiet conversion.

We can talk a great deal about multiplying leaders and still need everything to pass through our hands.

We find it hard to delegate.

We correct too soon.

We do not allow mistakes.

It unsettles us when someone else does things differently.

Jesus called, lived alongside, explained, sent, allowed learning, corrected, forgave and trusted again.

Fruitfulness has something of begetting about it:

life continues beyond us.

MIRROR OF TEPEYAC

When the bishop does not believe him, Mary does not step in to take his place.

She sends him again, with more responsibility, not less.

Then she entrusts him with something even greater: the sign itself, which he is to carry with his own hands, in his own tilma.

Each time Juan Diego could have been replaced, Mary chooses instead to entrust him with one more step.

He is not an extra in a work that others carry out.

And yet the work remains far greater than he is.

To trust truly is to give a little more each time, not to do the work in the other person's place.

WITH OTHERS · Trusting and forming

This may be one of the central questions of the whole journey:

Am I forming apostles or collecting helpers?

A helper assists in carrying out something I lead.

An apostle also begins to discover the responsibility God entrusts to him.

Forming means:

- looking,
- recognizing gifts,
- entrusting something real,
- giving room,
- accompanying,
- reviewing,
- correcting when necessary

- and trusting again.

The goal is not for everyone to do things my way.

It is for them to learn to respond to God.

For conversation

- Who believed in me before I was fully ready?
- Do I need to be indispensable?
- Whom do I see right now as able to grow?
- What real responsibility could I entrust to them?
- Do I give them enough room to learn?

This Week

Inner step

Ask:

> “Lord, give me eyes to recognize what you are making grow in others.”

Missionary step

Choose one particular person.

Entrust them with a real responsibility, small but complete.

Agree on:

- what is expected,
- how much freedom they have,
- and when you will review together how it went.

Until that review, avoid stepping in unless it is truly necessary.

Expected fruit

To begin moving from doing a great deal personally to raising up people able to take on the mission and pass it on.