Commentary for the 16th of Ordinary Time.

God's Style of Governing. Wisdom 12, 13-16.19

The first reading speaks to us of our God. What is God like? This is always a big question. The Book of Wisdom presents him to us as a powerful governor, like a universal sovereign.

The Government of God: The power of God is the source of justice. It doesn't say that justice is the pattern that has to obey power but that power is the source of justice. How is this power exercised?



1. Forgives everyone.
2. Shows its strength to those who doubt.
3. Represses the audacity of those who don't know Him.
4. Judges with moderation.
5. Governs with great leniency.
6. Gives time for repentance of sin.
7. To those justified by God, He asks that they be "human".

The sovereignty of God: Our God is unique superior to everyone but is characterized by his "humanity".

- Apart from Him there is no other God.
- He has universal sovereignty.
- He can do as much as He likes.
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When we say "Thy Kingdom come" we desire this form of government for us. We see actually and very clearly how difficult it is to govern this world, how difficult it is to overcome conflicts between nations, between groups, between differences.

"The Good Desires of God".

Our God not only governs us, He is our lawyer, our intercessor, our helper.
The Holy Spirit, the divine `Ruah´ (breath) accompanies us, enters the deepest part of our being and prays. He intercedes for us with indescribable groans. Within the same God we have our intercessor, the Holy Spirit. We do not know how to pray for what we need. We are incapable of praying before God in an adequate way. Someone once said that this Pauline text declares the inability of the human being to pray properly. Perhaps the more appropriate meaning of this statement is that if we enter ourselves, if we make contact with the Spirit of God living in us then we will discover within us what God desires.

Christian spirituality does not consist in appropriating ourselves with something outside of ourselves but in discovering it already deep within us. The spirit lives there and this holy reality reveals the deep desire of God for us. With this also it is affirmed that we are incapable of knowing our deepest desire when we live superficially, when we fail to dedicate time either to knowing our interior or the mysterious guest who lives there.

The Parable of "Bad Government"

The parable of the weeds and the corn is a stroke of genius of Jesus but it unnerves us. I will define it ironically as the "parable of the bad manager". Normally we believe that to govern consists in separating the good from the bad, to allow the good to grow and to destroy the evil. For that the governors use the law, the rules as criteria of good government. It is enough for them to say it is legitimate, legal, and licit. But in reality is it so? The laws are made by those who make them. They are fruit of the legal majorities.

The majorities respond to the wishes and support of the minorities often interested. What appears to be

good is often born of evil. A political party is not going to vote for a law whose supporters are against it. So according to post modern thought the legality is very questionable. The laws are distinct at the same time as are elaborated under a political majority of the right or a political majority of the left. The laws of each country at times reflect the atmosphere of global politics directed by more powerful countries in as much as they defend their own powerful interests.

So the warning of Jesus is unnerving. Jesus came to say “Don’t think that it is easy to distinguish between the weeds and the corn, between good and evil. Don’t pull out the weeds because it is easy to pull out the corn at the same time. Wait!”

Let what we call good and evil grow up together. At the moment of judgment they will be distinguished clearly one from the other.

There is too much dogmatism “before time”. There is a kind of government that is impatient. It evaluates itself more and more in politics and religion – a government that thinks to have capacity to decide what is good and what is bad. There are very aggressive politics “to destroy the weeds”. They go step by step accomplishing their project. Wouldn’t these politicians do better by keeping the weeds and pulling out the corn?

We see how the parable of this Sunday is misunderstood when it is use as guide for “good government”. That’s why some would say “if God would act as he should…”

Fr. José Cristo Rey Garcia Parades, cmf - Marie Alexandre (Trans)