

Lenten Reflections in the Pandemic 3/12/20

Dearest, dearest all,

I am writing this Easter Foglietto while we are still living in Lenten time: the color is purple; we aren't singing "alleluia"; we are preparing for the feast.

With all our third level children we will certainly be practicing using the weapons of light.

As you may know, here in Italy because of the spread of the coronavirus we had to suspend catechesis meetings with children and the training of catechists: a new type of "fasting," certainly painful but not meaningless; rather, it is up to us to discover its value.

An Italian catechist wrote the following letter to the group of children she cannot be with in person:

*Dearly beloved,*

*I am thinking of these days we are living and the fact that we cannot prepare for Easter together walking the path of the Armor of Light, I wanted to propose to you a path that we can walk together even from home. If it seems to us that there is a little darkness around us, we have a powerful weapon of light that is prayer. Perhaps you will remember that St. Paul announced it to us. In the letter to the Ephesians chap. 5:8 he told us:*

*"For once you were darkness, but now **in the Lord** you are light. Live as children of light.'*

*As children of light, what can we do to keep this beautiful light alive? We can stay close to the source of light. Be with Him, listen to His word, talk to Him. There's a maxim that tells us something about that:*

*'Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door, and pray to your father who is in secret (Mt 6:6).'*

*There is a room to enter into and a door to close in order to be face to face with God the Father. What could this "room" and this "door" be? Of course, we need a quiet place in which to pray, but close the door to what? For what purpose? To 'pray to the Father,' ... but then perhaps we can think about how He is already there, waiting for us, waiting to be with each of us...*

*It may help us to listen to His word, perhaps a text that we have meditated on together in the atrium and that we particularly like; you can find a listing of some of them below. We can try putting this 'weapon' to use, even for a little while, maybe every day.*

*Let us remain united in the Lord who is the source of true life and light.*

Francesca Broli

For my part, I find this time to be difficult, especially because it is new, strange, incomprehensible in its profound meaning, and it must be understood, precisely for this reason: as a "sign of the times."

"Sign of the times" that is something that emerges in history and must be pondered in the light of God's plan. Then this time really becomes a "favorable time" to focus our attention on the "blank page."

+ First of all, with the certainty that we're not writing it alone. God first writes it with us, then we write it with Him. It is "our" blank page.

+Then we know that this "writing" will end at the Parousia: certainly, we cannot know everything about this culmination of history that we are awaiting, but, how many aspects of it we know, thanks to the word of the prophets, of the apostles, of Jesus himself!

+Finally, we know that, even if we find painful events on the blank page, it will always be a "measured" time, it will last "three days," and the third day will be that of resurrection.

I know this is a slightly different sort of Foglietto that I am sending you. Allow me then to finish it by sharing a "thought" that I wrote down this morning. I opened the window and saw the full moon in the light of dawn. I immediately thought in a month it will be Easter. Here, then, is my "answer" to this sign:

*Here we are, Lord, already at a full moon  
beautiful and faithful  
reminding us of times and stories and places:  
already your precious sign,  
incalculable:  
that in a month  
there will be salvation.  
And as always,  
and in your way:  
it will be at night,  
during the vigil.  
It will be love.*

*It will be as it already is:  
the fullness of time!*

Thank you for letting me share my “thought” with you whom I feel are family!

Happy Easter soon,

Francesca