

Pilgrimage from Macerata to Loreto

June 7, 2014

**“We have been taken hold of,
and feel the same surge of the heart Mary Magdalene experienced”**

Dear friends, at the beginning of your walk toward the Holy House of Loreto, I would like to offer you a few words of Fr. Giussani's that have given me great companionship in these times:

“The most beautiful thought to which I have been abandoning myself in these months is the imagination of how Mary Magdalene's heart surged the first time, and how for her it did not mean ‘I'll leave all my lovers,’ but meant falling in love with Christ. For Zacchaeus, when his heart surged for the first time, it didn't immediately mean, ‘I'll give away all my money,’ but it was the love-struck surprise at that Man. That God became one of us, a companion, is absolute gratuitousness; indeed, it is called grace.”

This is what we need for living, that the Mystery be our companion in life, as happened for Zacchaeus and Mary Magdalene. Poor like us, fragile like us, struggling with the urgent needs of living, incapable of obtaining what they desired, but God had pity on them, did not abandon them to fear and solitude.

The same thing happened to us, otherwise none of you would be here on this pilgrimage today. We found on our road someone whose life immediately appeared more human and more desirable to us, so much so that we felt envy of how they lived, and wanted to be that way too. And so over time, following, the experience that fascinated us at the beginning became ours too, the same experience of John and Andrew on the shores of the Jordan, as Pope Francis said, visiting that place: “Coming here to the Jordan to be baptized by John, Jesus showed His humility and His participation in our human condition. He stooped down to us and by His love He restored our dignity and brought us salvation. Jesus' humility never fails to move us, the fact that He bends down to wounded humanity in order to heal us: He bends down to heal all our wounds!” (May 24, 2014). Drawn by an encounter, each day the disciples felt more and more the desire for Him, such was their longing to see again the face of Jesus, who had taken hold of them with that question that glued them to Him: “What are you looking for?” (*Jn* 1:38).

This was the same experience of the disciples of Emmaus: “Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” More powerful than any disappointment and defeat is His presence. How can we tell this is so? Because He sets our “I” in motion again, making it live up to our hearts: “So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, ‘The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!’ . Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” (*Lk* 24:32-35).

My wish for you is that you may walk, sustained in the weariness by the certainty to which Pope Francis bore witness: “To His missionary disciples, Jesus says, ‘I am with you always, even to the end of the world’ (v. 20). Alone, without Jesus, we can do nothing! In apostolic work, our own strength, our own resources are not enough, even though they are necessary. Without the presence of the Lord and the power of His Spirit, our work, no matter how well organized, is ineffective. So, we go to tell the people who Jesus is” (*Regina Coeli*, June 1, 2014). This is why we have been chosen—what a great mystery! To bear fitness, walking toward Loreto and along the roads of life, within daily circumstances.

Have a good journey.

Julián Carrón