



61st Year

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THE UNITY OF THE BELIEVERS IN THE TRUTH

Unity or unification are meanings and practices which are observed and especially concern contemporary people. The common disposition of most people is to bridge the differences for the sake of peace and of supporting one another, which comes from the good of unity.

While much more so in the Church, unity, having the same opinion, and the same voice, are virtues which are demanded beforehand, because as Saint John Chrysostom characteristically says "the name of the Church is the name of agreement and of one mind". If we want, in other words to give one name to the Church, it is that of harmony and peace, of agreement and common confession. Because it is the common faith in one person, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul calls on the name of Christ in order to urge the Christians of Corinth as follows: "Be ye all saying the same thing", in other words, that everyone be confessing the same faith. And their confession should comprise a common train of thought of everyone, "in the same mind". Because it happen that we have in mind the same faith, but we have a different opinion when we express it. (Nikodemos the Haghiorite).

Divided opinions and favoritisms

Patronizing and favoritism is observed in believers who follow certain persons who inspire genuineness, authenticity or integrity in them, projecting faith and the spiritual life. Something analogous had been observed also in the local Church of Corinth and the Apostle wanted to correct the divided opinions among the believers, the recriminations and the preferences of certain persons who in their opinion, more so were expressing the truth of the Gospel.

Each one tells you that I am (a follower) of Paul or of Apollo or of Cephas" (1 Cor. 1:12). In other words, some preferred the Apostle Paul and his teaching. They considered him a genuine expresser of the Gospel. Others followed Apollo, a man with fervent faith and a teaching gift, who continued the apostolic work of Paul in Corinth.

Others considered Cephas (in other words the Apostle Peter) a genuine teacher of the Christian truth. His stature as chief of the twelve apostles probably impressed them, even though he himself does not seem to have ever visited Corinth. Finally there were those who preferred Christ. Not because they had realized the incomparable superiority of him as God and man before the Apostles. But this was their personal choice, as if Christ were one of the Apostles.

Attachment to Christ unifies the believers

The fact that Christ is One escaped them. There don't exist many persons with the qualities of Christ, there don't exist many types of Christ. This truth, if everyone who followed or is following Christianity had perceived it, there would be no disputes, nor schisms, nor heresies. The phrase of the Apostle is very strong: "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13).

Is it possible for Him who loosened the enmity between God and man due to sin, and preached peace to all the peoples of the earth, to become an object of disputes and disagreements? Christ himself in his High Priestly prayer told his Father "that they may be one" (Jn. 17:11), in other words, for his disciples and whoever believed in Him to be united, as He is united with His Father.

The Apostle Paul very aptly observes that maybe was Paul crucified (or whomsoever else) for the sins of men? Maybe were you baptized in the name of Paul? Only Christ was crucified for our sins, in the name of Christ we are baptized, we commune Christ. So why these division? Did He not send one unique Holy Spirit and He enlightened the Apostles what to teach? This Spirit of Pentecost does it not lead the Church "into all the truth?"

Faith in the one God unites

There don't exist many truths about God. God is one and true, faith is one and true, consequently our train of thought and opinion are identified in the person of the one God. And this person for the Church and for the Sacred Tradition is the person of Christ, who as the Apostle again reveals, is: "the God over all who is, blessed unto the ages".

We are called in our age to concentrate our faith in the one God, the Father Almighty and Savior of the world. His Only Begotten Son, Christ also preached the one God. The All Holy Spirit taught and enlightened the one God to the apostles and they to the world. The one Triune God. This truth as a unifying power, the Church projects to today's world. If all people embrace it, they will live the miracle of the unity of the faith and the prayer will become a reality: "one flock, one shepherd".

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