 Reading time: 2 min.

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6. All is well at home

Dear young people,
“I think that, in the world, there are no souls who love more cordially, more tenderly and, to put it mildly, more lovingly than I do, because it has pleased God to make my heart this way. It is said in my family that the first sentence that appeared on my lips as a child was: ‘My mother and God love me so much.’
From an early age I was among people. My father had decided that I would be educated not in our castle, but in a more regular school, comparing myself with other classmates and teachers, in short, moving away from the sort of ‘love bubble’that had been created at the castle.
Back from my studies in Paris and Padua, I was well convinced of my choice to become a priest, but my father was not quite of that opinion: he had, unbeknownst to me, prepared a complete library concerning Law, a position as Senator and a noble fiancée. It was not easy to bend him towards another path. I calmly presented my intentions to father: “Father, I will serve you until my last breath of life, I promise all service to my brothers. You speak to me of reflection, Father. I can tell you that I have had the idea of the priesthood since I was a child.” Father, although he was “of a very steady spirit”, wept. Mother intervened gently. There was silence. The new reality, under the silent word of God, had germinated. My father said: “My son, do in God and for God what He inspires you. For His sake, I give you my blessing.” Then he could take no more: abruptly he closed himself in his study.
At the end of my father’s life, I was given the grace to discern in summary all the love that made him so dear to me: in his candour, his ability to take on important commitments, his taking on the responsibility of guiding me to the end, the constant trust he showed in me, I always discerned the goodness of a noble man, also used to a rough life but with a big heart. Moreover, with the passing of time, his lively temperament softened, he even learnt to allow himself to be contradicted: my mother’s good long-term influence was decisive.
Dad and Mum really showed me two different, but complementary, faces of God’s own grace and goodness.
Perhaps you too, like me, have wondered how to live through the fatigue of experiencing that the vocation you are discovering is different from what others would expect of you. I have proposed, as much to the simplest men of my land as to

the king and queen of France, a very simple but highly demanding way: on the one hand, “let nothing trouble you” and “ask for nothing, refuse nothing”; on the other hand, that existence, with the choices it brings, finds meaning in being faced, even with fatigue, exclusively to live “as it pleases God”. Only from here is born the “perfect joy” which probably unites all true saints, men and women of God of yesterday and today.

Office for Vocational Animation

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