

## IN THE NAME OF CONSCIENCE

**One can only act in the name of conscience when this one is straight**

One of the social tendencies most highlighted in the so-called "first world" consists in trying to privatize "unpleasant" realities such as religion and take them out of the public scene. Without going into deep discussion of this subject matter—which, as Pope Benedict XVI reminded in his recent trip to Germany, true reason should never exclude the religious fact—, it is interesting to observe that often people try to fill the gap left by some concepts thought off as "old fashioned" with others that, after being so overused and stuffed up, run the risk of losing their essence and being put at the service of the ideological power of the time. A good example of this is conscience.

Nowadays, many things are done and justified in the name of our own conscience; in legal terms, the phrase "objection of conscience" has been coined to characterize this fact. Many defend righteously that personal conscience is, as a last resort and even above and beyond current laws, the most intimate and personal model of behaviour that someone has. However, it is necessary to ask what kind of conscience we are talking about and if all its conceptions have the same legitimacy.

Without going into philosophical rambling, we can state that we can only act out in the name of conscience when this one is straight. However, what is a straight conscience? It is that which is moved by the search of the truth and making good acts. And there is something in the most

## editorial

intimate part of a human being that makes anybody feel attracted to the good and the truth. It is also certain that this inclination for the good and the truth is not always sufficiently formed and trained to do what is right.

The training of conscience goes through having good references, people with whom we live that sincerely search the good and the truth in their lives and in society, and fight to represent these values in our lives from a reasoning open to the human being as a whole. Regardless of our limitations, we all have experienced that acting in conscience makes us happier, as we live in peace with ourselves and the rest of the human beings.

A good conscience is much more than an idea or a momentary craving. A straight conscience implies internal battle and discernment. In this sense, we should not be afraid of someone who's actions are moved by a straight conscience, since his own perception will not be the ultimate criteria of behaviour. Nevertheless, we must fear those who turn their conscience into an absolute and bonding value for all.

In the name of conscience we can and must make a better world, but only in the name of a straight conscience, that is, the one ruled by the good and the truth; that which makes good deeds and acts upon the search for the truth. Only the straight conscience makes it possible to live in peace with oneself and the others, and increases personal moral growth and the social capital of society.

The Council

## LIQUID SOLIDARITY

### The liquid solidarity is a grotesque mock of the christian charity, a collective self-deception

In previous occasions, I have referred to and praised the metaphor that the bright jewish analyst Zygmunt Bauman uses to represent the destiny of our societies. In one of his last monographs, *Liquid Love* (2005), he intelligently approaches the frailness of human bonds in the so called Liquid Modernity and the type of relationships that are settled in this cultural frame.

The lucid culture analyst exposes the post-modern individualism and the fear of western citizens to establish long-lasting relationships, that go beyond the mere acquaintences and connections. According to his point of view, the western citizen generally wishes to live alone, in a comfortable, modern and sophisticated apartment, open to the world through internet but isolated from the closest neighbours. He feels aversion to solitude but even more to commitment and ties. He prefers living separated, managing his social life according to his own preferences, in limited doses, avoiding any excess. He aspires to staying permanently untied, rejecting bonds and stable commitments, and defends his social, sexual and economic independence above all, independence he's not willing to sacrifice for any kind of love. He wishes to have intimate relations with expiration date and, if possible, without consequences. Grandson of sexual liberation, the liquid citizen abides comfortably by the erotic desire but avoiding falling in love above all, avoiding losing his mind for another human being, being specially afraid of engendering.

The western citizen needs to be connected, knowing that on the other side of the net there are individuals with whom, if convenient, he can chat but he's afraid of truly loving because he knows deep inside that loving means losing that intended self-sufficiency that with such ardor he defends; it means assuming responsibilities, limiting the

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personal battle field, being willing to give in and more importantly practicing self-denial and personal sacrifice.

Salve of his own ego, he is incapable of completely giving himself by replacing the "I" for the "you." He filters his relationships well and submits costs and benefits of any new bond to a mathematic computation. The instrumental and economizing mentality monopolizes the land of interpersonal ties. Liquid Solidarity does not obey pure gratuitousness, nor immediate impulse, but it obeys a self-concerned emotional calculation. The final result is feeling good with oneself, being able to continue consuming with voracity, without having to escape from silence, driving away the demon of guilt.

This concept of solidarity has nothing to do with the most genuine meaning of the word. In strict sense, solidarity is a virtue, a modern value that refers to the same theological virtue of charity. It designates a solid bond with the other, so profound and intensely lived deep inside that the other person quits being a stranger to become thy fellow man. Solidarity turns the other brother in the alter ego and his suffering is lived like an own.

The liquid solidarity is a grotesque mock of the christian charity, a sad image deformed from philanthropy that the erudites once dreamed of; collective self-deception. In any case, it is the model of the most evident forgetfulness of the other, of the obsession for the "I" and of the atomization of a society that avoids establishing ties with those who cause problems.

To look after such fellows, we need specialized technicians, qualified graduates to face human tragedies. We delegate onto others the duty of humanity. Sad solidarity, the liquid solidarity.

Francesc Torralba Roselló

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## PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

### The acceptance of Mary (just a 15-year-old girl!) meant the beginning of human salvation

I have had the great opportunity of spending from February 3 through the 10th a week of pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the friends of Communion and Liberation (a Catholic lay movement). Unlike tourists, the pilgrims are not only led by a cultural interest for the life of Jesus of Nazareth, but also by devotion. When we visit some places we see a relic from the past and we also experience a historic moment which is still alive in our present. Following the traces of Jesus of Nazareth and believing that through Him God's Greatness was revealed to the human being through the Mystery of Resurrection. Our guide in our pilgrimage was José Miguel García, an expert in the Holy Scriptures and Holy Land. He walked us through Nazareth, Bethlehem, the Tiberiades Lake, Bethany and Jerusalem.

I could explain many things about all the Holy places visited in our stay. I could explain that in many of those places I was moved. But there is one which has specially caught my attention and which has been my favourite place: Nazareth. It is in this city, located in the middle of the hills of Galilea, where the Basilica of the Annunciation is located and where the Virgin Mary said "yes". The acceptance by Mary (just a 15-year-old girl!) meant the beginning of human salvation. When reading in the Basilica the sentence "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14), a sentence that I had heard so many times, got a new meaning to me, as it became more true and personal: God also became flesh for me so that I can also be saved.

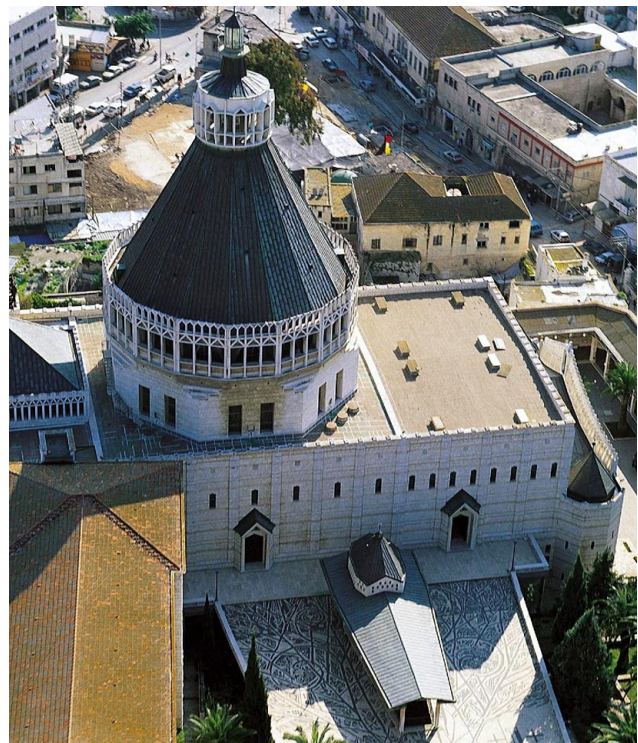
Besides the Holy places, it has been specially touching to get to know our Christian

## experiences

friends there. They have given testimony that Christ is still present in the Church, because of the appeal He causes in the people He chose. I particularly remember a Christian undergraduate. This girl loves the work of Shakespeare and because of this love she has started a close friendship with a Hebrew girlfriend. Also, I remember a Palestinian Christian girl that has started an orphanage with orphan Muslim girls repudiated by their families and that, with their devotion have made possible for Muslim and Hebrew girls to work together (how different from what TV shows us every day!).

Truly, the mercy that we have received through the death and resurrection of Jesus is necessary so that peace reigns in the Holy Land, because it seems that both the Muslim and the Jewish people only know the Tallion Law. Only through this mercy, which is reflected in the generous affection of our friends in faith, will it be possible for peace to stop being a distant utopia and to become an every day reality. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land, then, continues in the daily life.

Irma Fañanás Lanau



# communication

- Fr. André Stephan msc ([gutbub.marc@wanadoo.fr](mailto:gutbub.marc@wanadoo.fr)) leaves the mission in South Africa for one year (sabbatical year) and settles down for a period of time in his family house in Woerth (France). During this time, the parish responsibility will be assumed by Fr. Frank Gallagher msc ([frankp@icon.co.za](mailto:frankp@icon.co.za)). Fr. Frank lives in front of the parish and until now, apart from helping the parish and having some pastoral responsibilities with youth and adults groups, he also had as a main responsibility to give support to the hosting centre "Doping Centre", founded by him and placed near the parish. The "Doping Centre" tries to give refuge during the day time to all those who do not have anything to eat and it offers them food and shelter.

- The theatre group called "Elenc Teatral J. V. Foix", vinculated to the parish centre of Sant Vicenç de Sarrià Parish in Barcelona, will perform the theatre play "El Mercader de Venecia" by William Shakespeare next Saturday 21 and 28/10, 18 and 25/11 at 22:00 h and Sunday 22 and 29/10 and 19 and 26/11 at 18:00 h at the Sarrià parish (Pare Miquel de Sarrià 8, 08034 Barcelona; more information: <http://parroquiasarria.free.fr/elenc.html>). This theatre group will destinate part of the collection to "Clam per la Dignitat". We have been asked to offer two people for each performance. We need volunteers. Those who are interested, please contact Aleix Layola ([aleix.layola@gedas.es](mailto:aleix.layola@gedas.es)) or the Secretary ([clamdignitat@clamdignitat.net](mailto:clamdignitat@clamdignitat.net)).

- Those who are interested in volunteering with "Sostre" please, contact Javi Laguno ([jlaguno@yahoo.es](mailto:jlaguno@yahoo.es)) or the Secretary ([clamdignitat@clamdignitat.org](mailto:clamdignitat@clamdignitat.org)).

- Our friend Paz García-Faria has taken a sabbatical year and she will dedicate this course 2006-2007 to participate as a volunteer in the social projects that are carried out by jesuits in the neighbourhood of El Pozo del Tío Raimundo in the surroundings of Madrid: lots of courage and good luck!

- Laura García-Faria is spending three weeks of September once again in Calcutta, participating in the social assistance developed by the Missionaries of the Charity, order of nuns founded by the Beate Theresa of Calcutta.

- Our friends and members of "Clam per la Dignitat" who participated in the work camp in South Africa 2004, Núria Mundet and Aleix Badia, were married on July 29th in Barcelona: congratulations!

- In October the receipts corresponding to the year 2006 will be factured to all the members.

- Last Sunday August 27th took place in Sant Just summer meeting of the Council and other interested members of "Clam per la Dignitat". Among other things, the calendar for the course 2006-2007 was fixed:

- Sunday October 15th, 18:00 h (place to be detailed): III General Assembly

- Friday December 29th, 18:00 h. Council meeting and Christmas supper for all those who are interested.

- Saturday February 24th, 20:00 h. Council meeting.

- Sunday April 22nd, 11:00h. Training session and members lunch.

- Sunday August 26th, 18:00 h. Council meeting.

The Council meetings are opened to all the people who might be interested in attending them.

- Next Sunday September 24th will take place in Neuenhaus/Aichtal (Germany; Schlieps family house) the VI General Assembly of "Claim for Dignity e.V."

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