

Czestochowa Pilgrimage 2014 Message of Julián Carrón

Dear friends,

This is the drama of the human person: desiring something that you cannot give yourself, because our need is incommensurable to all that we can do or generate by our own strength. We do not decide what this need is, but we find it within as the experience of a “structural disproportion,” as Fr. Giussani said, that makes us desirous of the infinite, of the totality. We can be more or less aware that this is *the* question, but it is impossible for the desire for the totality not to be present in all that we do. For this reason, we say with Cesare Pavese that “What a man seeks in pleasures is the infinite, and no one would ever renounce the hope of attaining this infinity” (*Il mestiere di vivere*).

If all that we generate and do fails to respond, the only possibility is that the response comes from outside us. Without opening ourselves to something other, we cannot be fulfilled. But how can this opening happen, if so often we think we lose ourselves in opening to another? Only in experiencing an attraction (think of love) that is so strong that we manage to open our “fortress.” Only if the attraction of a presence is so powerful that it overcomes the temptation to close up in one’s little circle, can the human person open up. This is why the Mystery entered history, with an attraction so strong that it enables us to enter into a relationship with a presence, making us drop our defenses, and opening us to something that fulfils us.

We go to Czestochowa to ask that this Presence be so real in our life that it enable us to open ourselves to His attraction, because it is inevitable that each of us, if we do not find this Other, will seek fulfilment of our life with our activity, since the desire remains, like a giant “in a solitary field” (G. Leopardi, “Il Pensiero Dominante” [The Dominant Thought]). This is Jesus’ claim, not in the sense that He wants to impose something, but because it brings a promise: only in allowing His presence to enter our lives can we be fulfilled. Who is open to this? As we see in the Gospel, faced with this claim people raised all sorts of objections, to the point that almost everyone rejected Him. Love is needed to acknowledge Him; it is a problem of affection. The problem of life is not success, but love. It is crucial to understand this well in your own experience.

The pilgrimage is a special moment because the dynamic of the gesture, the weariness, the effort, the difficulty of the walk, help each person more easily realize the nature of his or her own need; they help them become aware of themselves and thus to ask something of the Other.

“Life is mine, irreducibly mine,” (“Movimento, ‘regola’ di libertà” [Movement, ‘Rule’ of Freedom], 1978), said Fr. Giussani, and nothing is as serious as life, because happiness, the reason for living, is at stake. The thing that is most pressing is to go to Czestochowa to ask for this awareness given to us since the first moment in which we had a serious experience of living, and which made us discover within a desire to be happy; we go to ask that this desire not lessen.

I ask you to go to Our Lady of Czestochowa adding this intention to all your intentions: that the movement of Communion and Liberation, in its 60th anniversary, remain faithful to the charism received, because we have seen with our own eyes the fecundity of the charism; we saw it incarnate in Fr. Giussani, who fascinated all of us.

We will be able to give the contribution to which Pope Francis calls us, to bring Christ to the existential peripheries of existence, in the places where everyone’s life is lived, only if we are witnesses to the charism now, of a Christianity lived with this attractiveness.