



“Glory - they said - to the one who fights and conquers! Glory to the purest of Virgins and to the most beautiful among the lovely ones!” As I awoke I felt myself vested with courage and strength, because the one who was calling me was the valiant Judith. All the armies of heaven were with this invincible warrior and the great leaders of the kingdom of God paid court to her. When I felt her presence, at once I renewed my vows of love, fidelity and loyalty to her, and she accepted them”. MR10, 9

Judith is a young and beautiful woman, although already experienced in life. Widow, without children, what at that time meant living in extreme poverty. But Judith knows how to manage her life. She governs her household by herself, and she does it in the way that provokes respect and admiration of the whole town. She is an independent woman who decided to offer her life completely to God through fasting, penitence, and one marvelous action that will gain her a place among the most important persons in the Bible. Because Judith is a woman who knows the heart of God.

When her people lose all hope for salvation and starts to tempt God requiring of Him some miraculous actuation in their favor, Judith has courage to reproach it to the chiefs of the people because of their lack of faith. She defends God's liberty and his right to act according to his own will. For some reason, he is the God. If it pleases Him to save his people, he will do it whenever he wants and in the way he wants; and if not, well, we are his property, so he can do with us whatever he pleases. But it is not our thing to give him conditions. Our thing is to do what there is in our hands to show him our faith and trust.

And Judith will put herself in danger to save her people. Because she knows the pain that a woman feels when losing her husband, and she doesn't want that any other woman may suffer for the reason of some stupid war. She knows how it feels not to have children, and she doesn't want that even one of these small ones may perish by the hand of an enemy. Because she knows that God cares for his people and never abandons those who act guided by his Spirit.

The Book of Judith in its 7 first chapter shows us the world without women. It is a world dominated by ambition of men who desire to be treated like gods, and in their egoism are able to destroy whole nations. This image also shows us the Church where a woman has no importance, a Church dominated by men. The change of clothes that Judith does, taking off her robes of widow, can be read as a call for the women to raise up from our slavery, to take off our humiliation. She knows to keep the hope against every hope, because she trusts in the power that is bigger than any human power, than her own power. And this trust gives her strength and courage to oppose not only the chiefs of her people, but to the greatest powers of her world.

For Francisco Palau, Judith represents a young Church, full of dynamism, capable of transmitting hope and of battling against the evil that surrounds her people with all the means she has in her hands, her own beauty included. It is the Church that gives hope, faith, and trust in the most difficult situations of life. She awakens courage in the hearts of the believers (the way she did with Palau himself so he might battle against demons); she renews the hope and brings salvation of the whole world; she animates her children in concrete and bold actions in favor of the most vulnerable against all the forces of evil inside and outside of the Church.





intercession

This image continues being very actual in our times. We need this attitude of Judith to be attentive to the plans of God, to God's liberty, without demanding of him special actions.

- We need her courage to reproach to those who try to manage things "on their own" that we belong to God, not to the logic of the world.
- We need her unbreakable faith in front of difficulties to bring hope to the hopeless.
- We need her courage to do crazy and dangerous things that can bring salvation, with no other guarantee than our knowledge of God's heart.
- In this we will show our youthfulness and our beauty, the youthfulness and beauty of the Church.



Let us end this reflection listening and making our own the words that Judith directs to God in the moment of supreme anxiety and fear: [\(with some delicate music in the background\)](#)

"Oh God listen to me! You have done all the things: the past ones, the present ones, and the ones in the future; you have thought the present and future time; only what you dispoise is happening, and your designs present to you and say: 'Here we are!' All your ways are already prepared, and your judgements foreseen. Look, then, at our enemies (...), look at their pride, send you anger over their heads; give to my hands the strength for what I have projected (...) abate their pride through the hand of a woman. Your strength is not in number, nor in your warriors, but your are God of the humble, defender of the little ones, sustain of the weak, refuge of the vulnerable, savior of the hopeless (...) Make the nations and tribe acknowledge that you are Yahweh, God of power and strength, and that there is no other protector aside of you for the people of Israel" (Jdt 9,4-7.9.10b-11.14).

(Canto a elección)

Let us ask for the grace that we desire through the intercession of Bto. Francisco Palau

Almighty and merciful God and Father, we thank and bless you for instilling
in the heart of Blessed Francisco Palau a singular love for the
Church, the mystical Body of Christ, by revealing to him her
beauty as illustrated in Mary, and inspiring him
to serve her through prayer and apostolic activity.

Grant us his prompt canonization in the Church and the special grace we are asking through his
intercession. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

