



**On this third day of the novena, we will reflect on the figure of Deborah.**

**We find Deborah and Jael on the pages of the Book of Judges. It is a short story, of only two chapters, but not less important because of that. Deborah without any doubt is a woman of great authority in the people: she is judge, prophetess, “mother of the nation”.**

*“... there were already twenty years that he had the people in a very hard oppression ...” the children of Israel cried out to the Lord “... and through Deborah, the prophetess and Barak he brought them out of slavery” Lu III, 17.*



The people come to her looking for justice and help in times when their freedom, both religious and national, was in grave danger. Deborah has authority to call Barak and tell him to go and fight. From this biblical story, it seems like Barak has already received this command from God himself, but he didn't go, scared to lose. Only when Deborah promises him to accompany in this battle, Barak goes forth. And he wins, but not because of his own strength or ability, but thanks to another woman, Jael, who take things in her own hands. This way, the people is again saved, and it is clear for all that God is the one who protects them in mysterious and extraordinary way, and that when Israelites remain faithful to their God, there is no power in this world that can harm them.

In the intimate writing *My Relationship of Francisco Palau*, Deborah appears to represent the Church in her two aspects: her Magisterium and her prophetic-salvific action. The Church by one hand, has authority to say a word to society; it is even the urgency that “the supreme hour has come to speak, to write, and to say what we believe useful for the universal social welfare” (*The Hermit*, 62/1870). By the other hand, she has authority to command her chiefs, the priests, to fight against the forces of evil that surround the smallest ones of her people. What happened agas ago to the people of Israel, es happening in every generation to the Church. In this key Palau reads his own vocation of exorcist. Same as Barak, Palau feels inspired to execute the commandment of the Church and to throw himself into the battle against the enemy that oppresses his people. In the mouth of wise and courageous Deborah, he puts the words that allow us to understand his struggles in defense of the Church: the care and surrender of himself in favor of the simple people who are surrounded by the forces of

evil. As a member of the Church and her priest, he makes his own the victory of Deborah: it is also his victory because he feels one with her: “I am, oh courageous and victorious Deborah, I am with you, oh militant Church, one thing. You are the one who battles, you are the one who wins: all glory to you” (MR 9,50).

The figure of Deborah comes to remind us that the authority doesn't depend on gender, but on how one listens to the Word and acts according to it. It is an authority that places itself at the level of people, listening to its cries, fears, insecurities. It is an authority that searches for collaborators in this struggle in favor of the disadvantaged, but than know that the victory doesn't belongs to a person, but to God, because it is God who protects and battles in favor of his people.

Maybe today in our communities, congregation, and Church in general, we need this kind of authority with feminine features of Deborah. It is time that also the women may be listened when we speak about what we believe. But in our way of speaking, we need to throw away any desire of power, of conquering, of putting ourselves above the others. May we desire only to serve to the Word, to defend the defenseless, to protect the weak. May we never give ourselves medals, because the victory belongs to God, not to us. The victory of God can arrive through the weak hand of a fragile and insignificant woman. We don't need anything else than simply trust that God also through our fragility and insignificance (not through our preponderance) will make great things in favor of his people.

***“Pray for all those in authority, so that we can live a quiet and peaceful life in all mercy and dignity.”. 1 Fil 2,2***





## intercession

*Spirit of consolation, may you be pleased to pour out your gifts on the world:*

*We ask you to deign to enlighten our rulers and all those who exercise authority  
and unite them in one heart, in that of Jesus.*

*It penetrates the minds of those who represent authority so that love reigns in them.*

*Give them the gifts of wisdom and counsel, so that, having destroyed the spirit of error and discord,  
strive to create and maintain order, justice and peace in our society  
and seek to favor the care of the smallest and most defenseless.*

*Be You, Holy Spirit, the indissoluble bond that unites You and all the peoples of the earth:*

*Grant us the grace to triumph over disunity and discord*

*so that we all live to serve God and our brothers in a close embrace of charity. Amen.*

To finish this moment of reflection, let us listen to the words of Psalm 131, asking God to keep our hearts from all desires of greatness that don't belong to us:

*“Lord, there is no pride in my heart  
and my eyes are not lifted up;  
and I have not taken part in great undertakings,  
or in things over-hard for me.  
See, I have made my soul calm and quiet,  
like a child on its mother's breast;  
my soul is like a child on its mother's breast.  
O Israel, have hope in the Lord, from this time and for ever”*

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**

