



On this eighth day of the novena, we will reflect on the figure of a Woman of Revelation 12

The image of the woman that appears in the Chapter 12 of the Book of Revelation is at the same time celestial and human. "Robed in sun, with the moon under her feet and crowned with the crown of twelve stars" are all indications of her high origin, of the glory and splendor she receives from God, of her atemporality and linkage with the history of salvation. But this woman "is pregnant, and she shouts in the pains of birth, because of the pain of giving birth". This speaks to us about her earthly condition because the suffering belongs to human ambience; it evokes the words of Saint Paul that



"all living things are weeping and sorrowing in pain together till now. And not only so, but we who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we have sorrow in our minds, waiting for the time when we will take our place as sons, that is, the salvation of our bodies" (Rom 8:22-23).

And this woman, celestial and earthly, is exposed to the action of the Dragon who wants to devour her child as soon it is born. The boy is saved, taken by God, while the woman escaped to the desert where God himself takes care of her. The war continues, the woman keeps being persecuted, and not only her but also the rest of her children, "who keep the orders of God, and the witness of Jesus" (Rev 12,17b).

Francisco Palau alludes directly to this fragment in My Relationships. The image comes to represent the Church that, although glorious, appears in the battle. Palau relates it to the situation of the young people who believed possessed and whose situation is even more grave since he stopped attending them. Palau suffers because of them and appeals to the prayer and solitude asking remedy for their situation.

"The dragon ... full of fury and rage, prepared his forces against the sons and daughters of the woman [...] I was full of dread and terror looking at this beast and all the powers of the earth surrendered to it" MR 13, 13. -

This image continues alive in our modern lives. We have believed that we are great; with God or without Him, we are convinced that as women we can do it all; the world makes us believe that we need nobody, man or woman, to be women of success that would shine in their career and private life. We are robed in glory. And we are glorious, that's true, but because our true glory comes from God; from Him comes our light and our fertile maternity. But the experience of life

many times puts us in situations of limit, of total impotence, of seeing how the persons we love most leave us, how the apostolates in which we gave it all are frustrated, how our plans that we seemed to control don't go as we expected. Everything seems threatened. And there seems to be no evident reason, it all simply tumbles down, and we feel dead in life, on the desert without exit. The Book of Revelation wants to teach us the truth of our life: there is evil in this world, and we are subjected to its consequences. But God also exists, and the final victory belongs to Him. Even on the desert, he keeps taking care for us and nourishing us, sending his angels to battle against the force of evil. The suffering and failure are part of our life. The feeling of impotence in front of the suffering, ours or of others, is part of our daily experience. We need to learn to see further, to fight, and to wait that one day we will win together with God.

Offer to the Lord those impotences that you may be living ... in the silence of your heart, talk about it with God ...





To finish this reflection, I invite you today to pray in silence of your heart this Psalm and to get from it all the hope that your need in the moments when you feel weak and impotent facing life:

*„Keep me safe, O God: for in you I have put my faith.
O my soul, you have said to the Lord, You are my Lord:
I have no good but you.
As for the saints who are in the earth, they are the noble in whom is all my delight.
Their sorrows will be increased who go after another god:
I will not take drink offerings from their hands,
or take their names on my lips.
The Lord is my heritage and the wine of my cup;
you are the supporter of my right.
Fair are the places marked out for me;
I have a noble heritage.
I will give praise to the Lord who has been my guide;
knowledge comes to me from my thoughts in the night.
I have put the Lord before me at all times;
because he is at my right hand, I will not be moved.
Because of this my heart is glad, and my glory is full of joy:
while my flesh takes its rest in hope.
For you will not let my soul be prisoned in the underworld;
you will not let your loved one see the place of death.
You will make clear to me the way of life;
where you are joy is complete;
in your right hand there are pleasures for ever and ever” (Psalm 16)*

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.

