



WHEN WE SAY INCLUSION

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“Inclusion!” is one of those new, recent words that suggest as well as a deficiency also a project, the possibility of a new beginning and a preoccupation in making the message clear:

Perhaps some of its potential can be conveyed if we contrast it with its opposite, a much better known and sadly too freely used word: “exclusion”.

Past history, and even more so recent times, is full of people, sometimes whole groups, even whole nations and whole continents, who have suffered in their very flesh exclusion, discrimination or as we used to say, “ghettoization” as a result of the selfishness of a privileged few.

Slavery, colonialism and the denial of rights, at once come to mind, ... rights denied to women, to “blacks”, to gypsies, to Jews, and all those considered unworthy or incapable of benefiting from the undoubted advantages and accomplishments of politics, technology, progress and wealth.

“Inclusion” is certainly a great shift forwards, a move towards those utopias and dreams of more open and far sighted minds: that recog-

nise the earth to be the home of all mankind, its resources belonging to everyone, to truly everyone, united by the same rights and answering to the same laws, of freedom of conscience, faith, opinions and equal opportunities... This is the very foundation of every authentic human rapport, between individuals and also Institutions (States, International Organisations, Movements...).

Believers can and must rightly enter this project, bringing with them their special and personal contribution, starting from their past errors and not least their silence, a silence that deafens and continues to echo loudly in the hallways of history.

God’s fatherhood and motherhood for us, His Son’s taking on completely our fragile humanity and the force of the Holy Spirit that blows where it wills, is this not sufficient light to illuminate us and to free us from every temptation to separate, divide and reject?

It is Almighty God who holds up to us this ‘highway’ of inclusion: He embraces us, heals us and accepts us while respecting and promoting our personal qualities and differ-

ences, to the point that He “became” for our sakes like one of us!

The summer holidays are now over, stowed away in our mobiles. We undoubtedly will have seen many people and visited many places (money permitting...), which I hope have bettered and influenced us in a positive way.

We begin again now. We must start again from everyday life and not overlooking the events of these last months, many of which continue to be marked by profound political, racial, religious, cultural and economical lesions. There seems to be no end to it.

Let us try and reflect a while on the road followed by Our Lord and by our saint friends, Padre Pio, John Paul II, Mother Teresa...: a road of opening and not closing, of embracing and not rejecting, of sharing and not hoarding, a moving forward beyond respect to promotion, to admiration and wonder...

This is what we mean when we say “inclusion”!

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