



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SEMINARY

AT THE SCHOOL OF THE HOLY GHOST: THE *MAGNIFICAT*

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

A Samaritan woman approaches Jacob's well, where Our Lord Jesus Christ, tired from His ceaseless apostolic journeys, takes some rest. She comes to draw water, as she does every day. Used to the place, she hardly pays attention to the surrounding details; her gestures are mechanical, her mind is elsewhere. Nonetheless, she notices that this man resting is Jewish, but still she pays only a vague, also mechanical attention to him.

She does not know yet that Christ is waiting for her. As He waits for each one of us during our lives. Perhaps we do not know it yet. How many times, indeed, Our Lord has come, incognito, to rest near us and we have not recognized Him! How necessary it is to remain attentive to the unexpected meeting with God at the turn of the road.

Animated by the desire to save this soul, Our Lord takes the initiative. He addresses her in simple terms in order to raise her imperceptibly to realities far more necessary than those of water. He awakens her soul to divine beauty, without letting Himself be put off by her apparent dull-wittedness. Kindly and gently questioning her, our Savior offers us, in this beautiful passage of the Gospel, a magisterial lecture on the grace that transforms the soul and makes of the sinner another Christ. He also reveals to us the burning desire that animates His filial heart: He came into the world to give His life to His Father so that a generation of adorers in spirit and truth may be raised, inflamed by the fire of Love, rendering honor and glory to His Father.

Our Lord is the adorer par excellence, the only one who is able to express the majesty of God and His infinite mercy. On this earth, His life was a song of praise rising before His Father, a song perfected by the divine symphony of Calvary. From now on, Christ wants this song to be perpetuated on earth until the end of the world. Having paid the price with His blood, He seizes souls and gives them the power to continue in time this song which He Himself sings within the bosom of the most Holy Trinity for all eternity.

Christian life is wholly contained in the desire, expressed by Christ, to spread the fire of Love. Souls are called to become adorers in their turn, in order to continue this work of praise. They must let themselves be seized by the love of Christ, who wants to enter into them and perpetuate His mystery of Love through their lives.

This vocation is the Christian vocation; it is not only for souls consecrated by religious vows or by the priesthood.

The grace of baptism demands holiness from the soul. To receive the baptismal water is nothing else but to receive the vocation to be constantly converted and to go out of oneself. In other words, the baptized one is called not to take himself as the ultimate object of his desires and to take to heart, by making them his own, the desires of Christ, which are nothing other than the interests of the Father, the irradiation of His glory.

Too often, we forget to live our religion on this level and, incapable of leaving behind our petty priorities, we manage to reduce Catholicism to a stale moralism because we think, wrongly, that holiness is to reach a certain perfection.

It is not so. Holiness consists in forgetting ourselves, making room for Christ. According to the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, holiness can be defined as a friendship between God and man. However, the true friend does not look to his own benefit, but in everything he seeks the benefit of the other and does not rest until he gives all that is in him to his friend. He wants with his whole soul the friend to be at his side, in his home, and he only wishes to carry out his friend's will. Thus, the least of his friend's desires is considered by him as a command, which he joyfully hastens to obey.

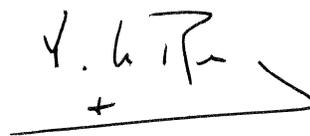
Holiness cannot be the result of one's own efforts, but a complete handing over of oneself to God; better, a capture of the soul by the Holy Ghost, perpetuating in us the life of Christ.

It is the Holy Ghost, indeed, who is the soul of our souls and who wants to penetrate into the center of our souls as He did for all the saints, starting with the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, whose holiness is expressed in her *Fiat* indefatigably repeated. And what is the *Fiat* of Our Lady but the highest answer that a soul can give to the Holy Ghost? She goes her way, refusing to keep anything for herself and abandoning herself without reserve to the divine good pleasure. The capture of the soul by God is then perfect and the Virgin joins her voice to the voice of her Son. *Magnificat*.

On this eve of Pentecost, let us answer favorably the invitation to gather ourselves around Our Lady so that she teaches us how to sing, each one according to his own voice, the *Fiat* and the *Magnificat*. Our children's voices will be united to the songs of our Mother, which we will pick up again in chorus. Our souls will thus allow themselves to be seized by the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of Love of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the school of the Holy Ghost, harmoniously mingling our voices with that of Our Lady, our life will be really the song of Christ perpetuated on earth. We will thus enter into this divine symphony of Calvary and from our souls will rise with confidence – against all the fears that too often paralyze us – a divine antiphon that only the Holy Ghost can teach us to sing adequately: *Credidimus Caritati*.

In Christo sacerdote et Maria.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'Y. le Roux' with a stylized flourish at the end. Below the signature is a horizontal line that ends in a right-pointing arrowhead.

Fr. Yves le Roux

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE SEMINARY

With a record number of faithful expected for the final ordinations in Winona, we regret that we will be unable to offer an ordination buffet lunch, as we have done for the past 28 years. With our limited resources already over-taxed and the impending costs of moving to Virginia later this year, it will be impossible for us to offer a reasonable amount of food for so many. The only meal at the seminary, therefore, will be the private banquet for the ordinands, their families and invited guests. We sincerely regret the inconvenience we know this will cause you, but hope you will understand our predicament.