Fifty years

Letter to our friends - Advent 2015

Dear friends and guests and those of you who follow us from afar,
What can we say in these days that mark fifty years from the end of Vatican Council II and from the beginning of our adventure here in Bose? As regard the council, we have no other sentiment except that of thanksgiving to the Lord for the gift he made to the Church of an event the protagonist of which is the Holy Spirit. Thanks to that event, two indications of the Gospel emerged as urgent: visible communion among all Christians baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and listening to all of humanity, even the non-Christian, engaged in other ways of spirituality or inspired by conscience. This has been the authentic and concrete change in the Church's position in the world's history. That our own ecumenical monastic way of life in Bose has been possible is due to this event.

As for life in Bose, I am not certain about anything, except that it too has need of the Lord's mercy. For this reason we do not commemorate and do not celebrate it, not because we want to be different from others, but because we put into the Lord's hands the way already traveled and tell him repeatedly every day: "Kyrie, eleison!". We have never wanted to "give witness" here and there, not even here in Bose. We would like to be able to give witness to Christ, the only Lord we recognize, while for ourselves ask from you only prayers and from the Lord his mercy.

We cannot say whether this way of life was willed by the Lord: we hope so. We cannot say whether we do it well or whether we are an obstacle to the Lord: this the Lord himself will say on the day of judgment. We do not know whether to each one of us it will be given to be called blessed, but we have tried to carry out in a human way what seemed to us to be human and not in contradiction to the word of God that we have sought and that we have believed to have found in listening daily to the holy Scriptures.

At the center of all our life is the Lord Jesus, this man who has taught us to live in this world, this man who passed doing only good, this extraordinary man, this man who recounted God in his flesh, his life, his words. He was and is God, truly an ambiguous word, but which for us means truth, eternity, what precedes us, accompanies us, follows us, here and beyond our death. Yes, we love him without having seen him and without seeing him we believe in him who gives sense to our lives, always inadequate in every lived relation, with the men and women that we meet and with him, in whom there is all humanity and all divinity.

When we commemorate him, when we invoke him, when at times we feel able to say with audacity that we live with him, then on our lips rises spontaneously the simplicity of "Kyrie eleison! Lord, have mercy on us!". And we want to pronounce these words as the voice of those who are not able to express it, crushed by suffering and evil and sin, men and women who find it difficult to live and to hope, poor because needy, the last, anonymous, not recognized… "Lord, have mercy on us!" But we would like to be also the voice of trees that stand near us whispering at the breeze, of animals that cry and sing, of immobile stones that are called only to stand where they are.

Dear friends, for us this is the vocation that we hope to carry to completion when we will ask to be laid on the named earth for our exit from this life to the life forever, to be again together as we have been here, in love, in friendship, in the surprising adventure of meeting…

Pray for us, so that we do not give scandal to anyone and that no one may say that we have been indifferent to them. Pray that we may be freed from the "great temptation". We pray for you.

br Enzo Bianchi, prior of Bose

Bose, 8 December 2015
50th anniversary of the closure of Vatican Council II
and of the beginning of our life in Bose