

ON THE CALL TO HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD

GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE – SERVANT LEADERSHIP CALL TO ACTION

Introduction

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Introduction (Cont.)

Spiritual combat; vigilance; and discernment

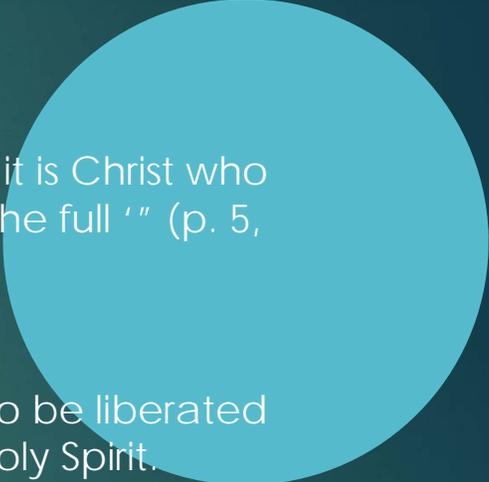
- ▶ Combat & Vigilance
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Universal Call to Holiness



- ▶ Your mission in Christ
 - ▶ “The Father’s plan is Christ, and ourselves in him. In the end, it is Christ who loves in us, for ‘holiness is nothing other than charity lived in the full ‘” (p. 5, par. 21)
- ▶ More alive, more human
 - ▶ “Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God’s grace.” (p. 8, par. 34).

In the Light of the Master

- ▶ “Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy when he gave us the Beatitudes.” (cf. Mt 5:13-12; Lk 6:20-23) (p. 14, par. 63)
- ▶ “Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite. We can only practice them if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride.” (p14, par.65).
- ▶ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (p. 14, par. 66)

Signs of Holiness

Perseverance, Patience, & Weakness

- ▶ "Within the framework of holiness offered by the Beatitudes and Matthew 25:31-46, I would like to mention a few signs of spiritual attitudes that, in my opinion are necessary if we are to understand the way of life to which the Lord calls us." (p. 23, par. 110)

Joy and a sense of humor

- ▶ "The Christian life is '“joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 14:17), for the necessary result of the love of charity is joy; since every lover rejoices at being united to the beloved ... the effect of charity is joy.'" (p.26 par. 122)
- ▶ "Christian joy is usually accompanied by a sense of humor." (p. 27, par. 126)

Signs of Holiness (Cont.)

Joy and sense of humor (Cont.)

- ▶ "Here I am speaking of a joy lived in communion, which shares and is shared, since "there is more happiness in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35) and "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7) (p. 27, par. 128)

Boldness and Passion

- ▶ "Holiness is also *parrhesia*; it is boldness, an impulse to evangelize and to leave a mark in this world. To allow us to do this, Jesus himself comes and tells us once more, serenely, yet firmly: "Do not be afraid" (MK 6:50)(p. 27, par. 129)
- ▶ "Boldness and apostolic courage are an essential part of mission." (p. 28, par. 121)
- ▶ "We need the Spirit's prompting, lest we be paralyzed by fear and excessive caution, lest we grow used to keeping within safe bounds." (p. 28, par. 133)

Signs of Holiness (Cont.)

In Community

- ▶ "Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others." (p. 29, par. 141)
- ▶ "Our path to holiness can only make us identify all the more with Jesus' prayer" "that all may be one; even as you Father, are in me, and I in you" (Jn17:21)(p. 31, par. 146)

In Constant Prayer

- ▶ "Finally, though it may seem obvious, we should remember that holiness consists in a habitual holiness to the transcendent, expressed in prayer and adoration." (p. 41, par. 147)
- ▶ "So let me ask you: Are there moments when you place yourself quietly in the Lord's presence, when you calmly spend time with him, when you bask in his gaze? Do you let his fire inflame your heart? Unless you let him warm you more and more with his love and tenderness you will not catch fire." (p. 41, Par. 151)

Spiritual Combat; Vigilance; & Discernment

Combat & Vigilance

- ▶ “The Christian life is a constant battle. We need strength and courage to withstand the temptations of the devil and to proclaim the Gospel. This battle is sweet, for it allows us to rejoice each time the Lord triumphs in our lives.” (p. 33, par. 158)
- ▶ “Along this journey, the cultivation of all that is good, progress in the spiritual life and growth in love are the best counterbalance to evil.” (p. 34, par. 163).
- ▶ “The path of holiness is a sources of peace and joy, given to us by the Spirit. At the same time it demands that we keep “our lamps lit” and be attentive.” (Lk 12:35) (p. 34, Par. 163).

The Great Criterion

In Fidelity to the master

- ▶ “In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel (vv. 31-46), Jesus expands on the Beatitude that calls the merciful blessed. If we seek the holiness pleasing to God’s eyes, this text offers us one clear criterion on which we will be judged. “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. (vv. 35-36).” (P. 20, par. 95)
- ▶ “The text of Matthew 25:35-36 is “not a simple invitation to charity: it is a page of Christology which sheds a ray of light on the mystery of Christ.” In his call to recognize him in the poor and the suffering, we see revealed the very heart of Christ, his deepest feelings and choices, which every saint seeks to imitate. Our Lord made it very clear that the holiness cannot be understood or lived apart from these demands, for mercy is “the beating heart of the Gospel.” (P. 20, par. 96 & 97).

Spiritual Combat; Vigilance; & Discernment (Cont.)

Discernment

- ▶ “How can we know if something comes from the Holy Spirit if it stems from the spirit of the world or the spirit of the devil. The only way is through discernment, which calls for something more than intelligence or common sense. It is a gift we must implore.” (p. 35, par. 166)
- ▶ “We must remember that prayerful discernment must be born of a readiness to listen: to the lord and others, and to reality itself, which always challenges us in new ways. Only if we are prepared to listen, do we have the freedom to set aside our own partial or insufficient ideas, our usual habits, and ways of seeing things. In this way we become truly open to accepting a call that can shatter our security, but lead us to a better life.” (p. 36, par. 172).

Steps to Becoming a Great Spiritual Leader

Rediscover Great Leadership*

1. Think about leaders & leadership in a new way
2. Desire to become a great leader
3. Confront the failures of leadership
4. Appreciate the challenge of greatness
5. Focus on who you are as a leader
6. Integrate leadership and spirituality
7. Let your style of leadership give the world something to think about
8. Take courage in your pursuit of spiritual leadership
9. Become part of a new generation of leaders
10. Emphasize the Christian dimension of your leadership

**Spiritual Leadership – How to become a Great Spiritual Leader, Leonard Doohan, ACTA Publications, 2014*

Steps to Becoming a Great Spiritual Leader (Cont.)

Accept ten personal reflections*

1. Affirm people
2. Build good social interactions
3. Always do more than you ask of anyone else
4. Reflect & pray
5. Live simply as a leader
6. Choose to work with opposition
7. Be a free voice
8. Plan from hope
9. Keep working life in perspective
10. Create new projects

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Conclusion

May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen, lest you fail in your precious mission. The Lord will bring it to fulfillment despite your mistakes and missteps, provided that you do not abandon the path of love but remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens.

References

This presentation quotes and cites heavily from Apostolic Ehortation **Gaudete Et Exsultate** of the Holy Father **Francis** on the call to holiness in today's world.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Gaudete%20et%20Exsultate.pdf>