



Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò

APPEASE, CHRISTE

Homily on the Feast of All Saints

*Auferte people perfidam
believeum de finibus,
ut unus omnes unicum
fold nos Pastor regat.*

*The perfidious race expels
from regions where the faithful dwell
let one sole shepherd be our guide
all Christians in one fold abide.*

Hymn. Appease Christe servulis

Only a few days ago the Divine Liturgy intoned the praises of the King of kings, proclaiming the Divine and Universal Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Today the Holy Church celebrates His Heavenly Court: Most Holy Mary, Queen; the nine angelic Hierarchies: Angels, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim; the Prophets of the Old Testament; the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Confessors of the Faith, the Doctors, the Holy Virgins, the Monks and Hermits, and all that infinite host of blessed souls who populate the Heavenly Jerusalem, *beata pacis visio*. The hymn of Vespers of this feast,

Placare Christe Servulis , is a song to our comrades in arms, to the knights of the Incarnate Word and of the most august Virgin, to the *cœlicoli* , the inhabitants of Heaven who enjoy the beatific vision in the presence of the Most Holy Trinity. Saint John, in his vision on Patmos, contemplates *turbam magnam, quam dinumerare nemo poterat* (Rev 7:9), and it is significant how he notes that these are people *ex omni tribu, et lingua, et populo, et natione* – of every tribe, and language, and people, and nation. An immense multiracial and multiethnic army, but united by the profession of the same Faith: *They all stood before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, and had palm branches in their hands* (Rev 7:9). The angels, the elders, and the four living creatures prostrated themselves before the throne of the Divine Majesty, saying: *Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen* (Rev 7:12). These words recall those that the Holy Church intones during the Canon of the Mass, a few moments before the Consecration: *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of armies arrayed for battle! The heavens and the earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.* And with the eyes of the spirit we see all creatures bowing to the Holy of Holies, from angelic pure spirits to human beings, from animals to plants, whose perfections are a ray of the supreme perfections of God. That wonderful Canticle of the Three Children (Dan 3:52-90) which we priests recite at *Lauds* comes to mind: *Benedicite, cœli, Domino... Benedicite aquæ omnes, sol et luna, stellæ cœli, omnis imber et ros, ignis et æstus, rores et pruina, gelu et frigus, glacies et nives, noctes et dies, lux et tenebræ, fulgura et clouds, montes et hills, universal germinantia in terra, fontes, maria et flumina, cete, omnes volucres cœli, omnes bestiæ et pecora ... laudate et superexaltate eum in sæcula.* Joining in the praise that rises up from Creation, there are the sons of men, the priests of the Lord, His servants, the spirits and souls of the just, the saints and the humble of heart, and the three youths who make the flames of the furnace unharmed: *Benedicite, Ananias, Azariah, Misaël, Domino: laudate et superexaltate eum in saecula: quia eruit nos de inferno, et salvos fattit de manu mortis: et liberavit nos de medio ardentis flame, et de medio ignis eruit nos* : for He has freed us from hell and saved us from the grip of death; He has freed us from the burning flames and saved us from the fire.

This wonderful vision, in which we almost perceive the beatitude enjoyed by our companions the Saints, is certainly consoling for us who have daily before our eyes not the *Civitas Dei* , but the *Civitas diaboli* . Down here everything is falsehood, vice, fornication, murder, sin, ugliness, death, and chaos. But what could we expect from the world – of which Satan is prince – when the Lordship of Our Lord Jesus Christ is denied and blasphemed, and the *Christian society* is betrayed and despised? When do the Nations prefer the abject tyranny of Satan to the gentle yoke of Christ the King and High Priest?

The Feasts of Christ the King and All Saints – together with tomorrow's Commemoration of the Faithful Departed – remind us that we are *exsules* , citizens of a homeland from which we are still far away from and to which we must return; *exsules filii Evæ* , wounded by original sin and restored to Grace in Mary Most Holy, the new Eve; *in hac lacrimarum valley* , which is a dark and cold valley, full of pain and trials; a valley that we pass through *moans et flentes* , considering what we have lost with sin and looking with hope to what awaits us, if only we listen to the voice of Him who loved us so much that He became Incarnate, suffered and died for ours Redemption and so that we might deserve, while we are in this life, the enjoyment of His eternal triumph in the next. I recalled this in my home for the Feast of Christ the King, quoting the words of Our Lord: *You say, I am King. I was born for this, and for this I came into the world: to bear witness to the Truth; Whoever comes from the truth listens to My voice* (Jn 18:37). Whoever comes from the truth listens to the voice of Christ, because in Him he recognizes his God, Lord, and King, and to Whom he recognizes sovereign divine rights, both of lineage and of conquest. *You are my friends, if you do what I command you* (Jn 15:14).

The Saints that the Church celebrates and honors are her true children and our true friends. Their heroic example is not a remote and unachievable model, but the proof that in our nothingness we can make ourselves docile to the action of Grace and be inflamed with Charity to the point of giving our very lives, facing the burning furnace, undergoing exile and prison. Even today there are Catholics who die or suffer for Christ; and in the

once-Christian West many souls testify to their fidelity to the point of being arrested because they pray in silence in front of an abortion clinic, because they oppose gender ideology, because they denounce the crimes of their governments.

Each of us, in these times of tribulation, may possibly be called to the privilege of a sanctity conquered by Martyrdom. We must not think that it is always other Catholics, in distant lands, who have placed before them the choice between apostasy and death, because the time is over in which society was well-ordered and recognized the Lordship of Christ and His Law. This is the time of preparation and combat; it is the time of trial and persecution before the return in the glory of Our Lord. And when sin abounds, Grace abounds all the more.

The Mystery of the Communion of Saints unites in Charity the souls of the elect to their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, restoring the Divine Order that Satan once shattered. We invoke our heavenly Patrons, and first of all our Advocate and Lady, *Regina Crucis* : *Placare, Christe, servulis, quibus Patris clementiam tuae ad tribunal gratiae Patrona Virgo postulat* – O Christ, look favorably upon your servants, for whom the Virgin Patroness invokes your clemency, at the tribunal of the Father's grace. And so may it be.

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