

Mankind And Divine Providence

During His ministry on earth, Jesus the Lord was teaching and healing, saying and working, by words and by deeds. These deeds were the proof of His unique authority to teach.

Undoubtedly, the most impressive deeds were the three events, when He raised a person to life, as Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, and in today's gospel the Son of the widow of Naim.

We have in this miracle the three realities, which take place in the whole of humankind's existence, i.e. the Man in the Son, and Jesus the Lord, and death, which presents the evil, as a parasite in the corrupted Universe. And this miracle explains clearly the nature of the relationship between Man and Universe, and between Man and God.

The Universe is the dwelling place in which man lives. And because of the corruption of our universe man has to struggle greatly to overcome evil and insure his existence, and his good existence. (to be , and to be well).

Evil as a parasite is everywhere and all around in human life, and torments it in different ways. By many

ethical problems, by natural disasters (floods, earth quakes, illness, etc ...), and finally by the ultimate natural disaster, i.e. death, as it is in the life of this widow of Nain in today's reading.

Faced with this struggle between man and the corrupted universe, we earnestly desire to know what the position of God is, something that this miracle shows it clearly.

This miracle proves that God does not shun man, and leave him alone suffering. If the evil is one reality in life, the most important reality is the presence of God. God intervenes with great love in the history of humanity. The whole Bible, and the History of salvation are different expressions of the same reality, which are the loving interventions of God.

This miracle demonstrates that God shares with Us our life, and deals with our difficulties, up to the point of changing the Laws of Nature, He already has established. That is possible for He alone, because He is the Creator and the organiser of these laws. So, we meet Him in the Gospel sometimes healing, another saving Peter from drowning, elsewhere causing the wind to be still, or feeding five and seven thousand people from a few fish, etc.... and here raising this widow's son. He defies the Law of death for the sake of man.

These miraculous interventions of God in the History of salvation are caused by His love as the expression of His providence for mankind. God had tried by His messengers, angels and prophets to take out the effects that man had put in by his sin.

Every miracle reminds us of these God's attempts. Each miraculous intervention is a clear sign of the presence of God and His companionship in our life. A miracle proclaim that "God is here and now " 9 a miracle is a beautiful icon in which one word is painted and clearly depicts: "God is with us ", Emmanuel.

From this aspect the resurrection of the Son in today's reading, is not only a sign of the power of Jesus the Lord, but more profoundly draws our attention to the event that God, not by any messenger, but also Himself He is among Us. That meant to the people of that time, that Messiah had come.

It is worthy to note that in this miracle in Luke's Gospel this is the first time that Jesus is called "Lord", meaning the Messiah. Then, this miracle came as an answer of Jesus to the question put by the disciples of John the Baptist. 'Are You the one who is to come, or should we expect another? " This miracle proves that Jesus is the one who comes, because the seeks are healed, and the dead raised to life.

In fact this miracle in its deepest meaning brings us to the last times and the scatological days when God will be among His people.

Now, this positive intervention of God in our life expects our response. And to express this clearly, this miracle as a loving action of God puts to the test our reaction. Fortunately the reaction of the people in Nain then was right and very positive, when they said "a great prophet has risen among us, and God has looked favourably on His people ". Our reaction should be no less positive.

Many times Jesus has refused to perform miracles, when He knew that the reaction in these cases would be negative or wouldn't lead to repentance and would not lead to reconcile man with God.

This is why Jesus refused to throw himself down or to turn the stones into bread when the Devil tempted Him. As well He refused to that generation to perform miracles, because He knew of their evil disposition. Didn't He also refuse to miracles in His own town because they didn't believe on Him? Likewise He was negative with Herod inquisitiveness and his curiosity to see miracles.

The human reaction at the Divine action, as we found out easily, is the primary cause, which makes the loving interventions of God possible, or not. Our human position, in fact, permits or prevents God to lavish his Grace on Us. The human freedom decides the role of God and his effectiveness in our life. The presence of God alone is not enough. He needs our cooperation. The deepest atheisms is not only to deny God's existence, but

most importantly to devoid and separate our life from His presence, and to kill His will to share His life with Us. Notice that God may intervene in our life as by miracles as by different known and unknown ways.

In conclusion the resurrection of the Son of the widow in Nain puts the question to us: Do we believe that "God is with Us "?

Reading the Gospel, no matter what part, we must be convinced that God is among us. And may, always, our answer to His presence be the same as that of the people of Nain, crying.

“God has looked favourably on Us”

Amen