



**Monastery of Sacred Heart - July 18 2007
61st anniversary of birth to Heaven
of the Servant of God Sister M. Consolata Betrone**

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**THE CONFIDENCE: "VERTEX EXPERIENCE"
OF THE *LITTLEST ONES***

The liturgy of this Wednesday of the XV week *Per Annum* for readings offered us two passages, particularly dense, intense and, seems to me, also particularly adapt for the circumstances of the memory of Sister M. Consolata. I will try to reread them in the light of the walk of faith of the Servant of God.

The passage from the book of Exodus (Ex 3,1-6.9-12) is one of the most well known pages and also one of the most significant in all the Holy Scripture: the burning-bush and the vocation of Moses. We are in front of an experience that devastates his life: "*Come now! I will send you to Pharaoh to lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt*". This is a venture that will occupy Moses' whole life, with exalting moments, glorious, but also with experiences of failure, moments loaded with anguish. And yet, even in these moments, Moses' faith doesn't fail, it is sustained by that first encounter, by that first experience. I connect to the experience that the young Pierina had at thirteen years old, with a mysterious intensity that will sustain her choice for the rest of her life: "*My God, I love you*". And for the question: "*Do you wish to be all mine?*", the generous and definite answer was: "*Jesus, yes*".

Fifty years ago a psychologist experienced in religion spoke of "vertex experiences". There are in life moments and experiences that really

represent a peak, experiences that feed for years, and even for the whole of your life, le subsequent choices. It's also about each one of us to cultivate these experiences or to look for such vertex experience, that consists in this to see or catch a glimpse of something of the face of God and feel ourselves in Him or notice more a presence.

In brief, but very densely, the passage of the Gospel of Matthew (*Mt 11,25-27*) tells us that it's not about experiences only connected to our sensitivity or intelligence, because: "*No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him*" (*Mt 11,27*). Therefore, it's about a gratuitous gift, of grace, or rather: the logic that emerges from this page is really that of reversal. They are experiences reserved not for the gifted, not for the learned, not for the intelligent, not for those particularly prepared from an intellectual point of view, but for the little ones. Now, in the category of the little ones we can, certainly, put whoever doesn't have one's own security, whoever doesn't feel adequate, whoever doesn't feel good enough, whoever is not able to give sufficient guarantees.

The words of Saint Paul, in a verse of the *hallelujah* (*1Cor 1, 27-29*), say it with force: "*God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing - and even more that little, even more that littlest -, to reduce to nothing those who are something*". It's like saying that the criteria of God are not our usual criteria, but, or rather are opposites. We Christians should not be astonished by the light of the stable of Bethlehem, or by the light of the death on Golgotha. We Christians should not be astonished by the light of the reflection of the Canticle of Mary on the history of salvation, the *Magnificat*: "*He has dispersed the arrogant..., he has lifted up the lowly*". That means: God has reversed the criteria. Is it not this, maybe, the littlest way of love of Sister Mary Consolata? Does it not consist in the conviction that the motor that moves the world is not our intelligence or initiative, not the miracles of technology, but the love of the Father that manifests in the Son, that manifests in the Son's Heart, in the profound intimacy of the Son that we call Sacred Heart? It is asked of us to not interfere with this gift of grace. How? By making ourselves the littlest, putting ourselves as much as we can in the corner. Of course, it's easier said than done in a society that glorifies the "I", where there is this hypertrophy or underdevelopment of the "I", because at the centre of everything are our sacrosanct rights, our desires, our needs, our aspirations, our requirements. Instead it's like saying that what I'm interested in is not my point of view, but that of the Beloved One and that for him I am willing to give up everything.

Sister M. Consolata speaks about "*total annihilation of herself*" and explains: thoughts, desires, talk about herself, to be that is a little bit at the centre of attention, to be us, to count, everything has to be this "*total*

annihilation of myself waiting solely to give you, Lord; the virginal act of incessant love".

Therefore, let's repeat with Jesus: "*I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth*" (Mt 11,25), since we are here to bless and thank the Father for a poor and simple nun that nevertheless helped us to better understand the Gospel, that has made some of the pages of the Gospel, among which is exactly **this** page, more clear, more evident, more usable. It becomes a page not of cancellation, but of realization of ourselves and, therefore, not a page of privation, but a page of affirmation.

We bless you, O Father, because you continue to enchant us with your gifts: Sister M. Consolata seems, in reality, a girl like many, that comes from a family like many, with an itinerary of research made of exciting and bright moments, but also moments of fatigue, of humiliation, in which it was necessary with patience to begin again.

We ask you, O Father, to be able to learn something from this walk of confidence of Sister M. Consolata': **the confidence**, well certified expression that she herself used and that means a delicate love of tenderness, and of trust, is this **littlest way**, also usable for the littlest and the poor souls which we are.

So, from these words of the Gospel, from this experience, that was the experience of Moses and the experience of this God close to his people, in this memory of our sister, of her walk of faith, of her itinerary, of her teachings, of her example, we can take the invitation of the confidence, to be witnesses of the Risen Christ, hope and trust where it is possible to establish the confidence. So this confident glance is not a naive glance, but a learned glance, exactly the wisdom of the little ones, of this wisdom that is a gift: a gift that in this Eucharist we invoke on each one of us and on all of our Church.