

FOCOLARE WORD OF LIFE – September 2023

Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.

(Ps 145 [144]:2).

Psalm 145 is a prayer the psalmist, based on his personal experience, acclaims the greatness of God in his life. He magnifies God's goodness and the universality of His Love when he writes 'the Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made' (v.9). He also confirms that God is faithful and holy in all his works and deeds. (v13) So the conclusion can be drawn that God is with us at all times, no matter what. These words can be an encouragement for us in the way we see God in our own lives. A God who will never abandon us; A God whose Love cannot ever be diminished.

Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.

In modern times, however, people may sometimes feel abandoned and alone. They fear that what happens each day is a matter of chance, just a succession of events devoid of meaning and purpose.

This psalm reassures and proclaims hope: 'God is the creator of heaven and earth. He is the faithful keeper of the covenant that binds him to his people. He is the One who does justice to the oppressed, gives the bread that sustains the hungry, and frees the captives. It is he who opens the eyes of the blind, raises up the fallen, loves the righteous, protects the stranger, sustains the orphan and the widow ...'.

Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.

This word invites us, first of all, to cherish our personal relationship with God by accepting his love and mercy without reservation. It invites us to place ourselves before this mystery and to listen to his voice. This is the foundation of all prayer. But this love of God can never separate us from our neighbor. When we imitate God the Father in concretely loving every brother and sister, especially the least, those who are rejected by others and those who are lonely, we come to perceive his presence in our daily lives. Chiara Lubich, when invited to speak of her Christian experience before an assembly of Buddhists, summed it up this way: '... the heart of my experience is this: the more one loves human beings, the more one finds God. The more one finds God, the more one loves men and women.' [\[ii\]](#)

Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.

But there is another way to find him. In recent decades humanity has gained a new awareness of the great challenge of ecological problems. Young people in particular are driving forward the recognition of a need for change: they propose a more sober lifestyle, new development goals, and the search for alternative sources of

energy. They also show commitment to the right of all inhabitants of the planet to have clean water, food, and air. In this way, filled with amazement, human beings can not only rediscover their relationship with nature but also praise God as they discover his tenderness toward all creation.

This is the experience of Venant M. who, as a child in his native Burundi, used to wake up at dawn to the sound of a bird's song and then travel dozens of kilometers in the forest to go to school. He felt fully in tune with the trees, animals, streams, and hills along with his companions. He had a sense of being close to nature and felt he was a living part of an ecosystem in which creatures and the Creator were in total harmony. This awareness became praise, not just in that moment but throughout the whole day.

Some people might ask, "What about those who live in cities?" Safeguarding nature is a rare occurrence in our concrete metropolises that are built by human hands amid the din of the world. Yet, if we wish, the sight of blue sky glimpsed between the tops of skyscrapers is enough to remind us of God; Or the sense of awe one may get in recognizing the gift that God has given to the men and women who have the talent to create the buildings around us. Perhaps just passing by a park where families and their children are playing with the joy of being together. All of these things and much more can be reminders of why we can pronounce the words of the Psalmist: "Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.

Edited by Augusto Parody Reyes and the Word of Life team.

¹ St. John Paul II General Audience 2 Jul 2003

¹ M. Vandeleene 'Io, il Fratello & Dio' in the writings of C. Lubich