

TOGETHER pilgrims on the way towards MADRID 2011

Spiritual journey in the company of CA young saints

Third stage (July – August 2010)

TIME TO MEDITATE

Luke 12,32-48 • CALLS US TO STAY WITH YOU. WE WANT TO FOLLOW YOU WHEREVER YOU GO

"Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

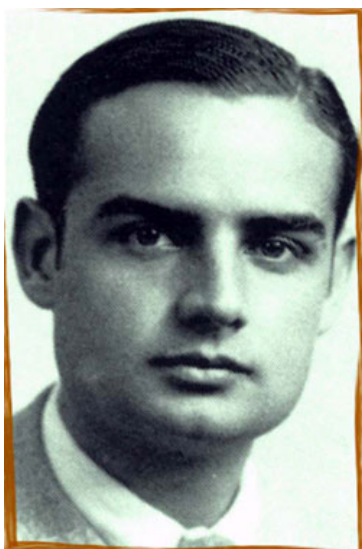
Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."

Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute (the) food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds him doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more".

Our experience, when taking decision about our own matters, about that which we have gained or that which concerns us, is very different from when we have to decide about something which, after all, is not ours but has been given to us to administer. Being an owner and being an administrator makes all the difference. We feel more at ease when that which is at stake is not ours and so paradoxically, very often, we are freer, more intelligent and less emotionally involved.

Jesus teaches us that to follow Him and to remain with Him we must first of all understand that we are administrators and not owners of whatever we have, even our lives. This fact has two direct consequences. It means that we need not worry, because as the true master of our lives, once we are his, he takes care of us. He is a powerful and merciful master, who can do all the good He wills for us. Also, this explains why He asks us to be vigilant, alert, intelligent and quick-witted. In fact, our duty is to be always on the look-out to find the right time and to seize every opportunity (the *kairos* of grace) so that the Lord of the world and of our lives, may do what He can and what he wills.

We have received a lot both as a gift or simply to administer, so much more will be expected from us.



BLESSÈD FRANCISCO DE PAULA CASTELLÒ Y ALEU

Biography

Thousands of lay faithful were killed during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) just because they were Christians, including a good number of Catholic Action members. The young Francisco de Paula Castelló y Aleu stands out among these. He was born at Alicante on the 19th April 1914. His family was of Catalanian origin but had moved to Alcante because of his father's work. As soon as he was born, his father died and his mother, together with him and his two brothers, moved to Lleida in Catalonia. Francisco attended the school run by the Maristi Brothers and later at the Jesuit Institute of Chemistry in Barcelona. In Oviedo (Sturias), as a university student, he joined in the political activities run by the Jesuits. He was a member of the "Catalunian Federation of Christian Youth", a branch of the Spanish Catholic Action. When he finished his studies in Chemistry, he worked in the Chemical Complex "Cross" in Lleida, where he got engaged to Maria Pelegrí. He was called to do compulsory military service and found himself in the tragic circumstances brought about by the outbreak of the civil war. On the night between the 21st and 22nd July 1936, he was imprisoned by the republican militants and on the following 29th September he appeared before the popular Tribunal where with a clear and steady voice he reaffirmed his faith. "If it is a crime to be a Catholic, I am definitely a delinquent and if I have a thousand lives to give to God, I will give thousand lives just as he will not fail to defend me". He is buried in the "Fosa Común de los Martires" at Lèrida. John Paul II beatified him on the 11th March 2001 together with another 232 victims of the same persecution.

Francisco's words...

From the first of three letters which Francisco wrote in the evening before his execution

«I have to face the death sentence. I have never been as calm as I am now. I am convinced that tonight I will be with my father in heaven. There I will wait for you. Divine Providence has willed that I am to be the victim for the mistakes and sins committed by us all. I am going to my death filled with joy and peace. I have never been so sure of my salvation. This is the end of my mission on earth. I offer all my present sufferings to God.»

To his sister: «María: Poor sister! Nevertheless, you will be brave and this tragic blow will not destroy you. If God gives you children, kiss them for me, from their uncle who will love them from heaven. Give a big hug to my brother-in-law. I hope that he will substitute me in being your support ...»

To his fiancée: «You are not to be distressed because of my death. I feel an unusual, deep, interior and strong joy within me. I thought of writing a sad farewell letter to you but I could not do it. I feel enthralled by happy thoughts, like a foretaste of Glory... I wanted to tell you how much I loved you, the affection I have for you and how happy we would have been together. But all this is secondary importance to me. I have to take an important step. I must tell one thing: get married if you can. From heaven, I will bless your union and your children. I would not like you to cry. You should remain proud of me. I love you. I have no time to write more».

The Holy Father said...

«No less edifying was the witness of the other martyrs, among which that of young Francisco Castelló y Aleu, 22 years old, a chemist by profession and a member of Catholic Action. Realizing the gravity of the situation, he did not want to hide but to offer his youth as a loving sacrifice to God and his brethren; he left us three letters, an example of strength, generosity, serenity and happiness, written a few moments before his death: to his sister, his spiritual director and his fiancée. So many examples of serenity and Christian hope!».

John Paul II, *Homily during the mass for the beatification*, 11 March 2001