



Fondazione Azione Cattolica Scuola di Santità
Fundación Acción Católica Escuela de Santidad
Foundation Catholic Action School of Sanctity
PIO XI

IN PREPARATION FOR THE 1ST OF NOVEMBER ALL SAINTS' DAY

REFLECTION | TESTIMONIES | PRAYER

Do not be afraid of holiness ... Do not be afraid to set your sights higher

Gaudete et Exsultate 32,34

Friday, 30 October 2020 - online for 1h



CATHOLIC ACTION, SCHOOL OF HOLINESS

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The dogmatic Constitutions Lumen Gentium and Gaudium et Spes deepen the specificity of the laity both in the Church and in the world and emphasize their responsibility in the search for their path to holiness. This vocation to holiness, which is common to all Christifideles - whether clerics, religious or laity - acquires in the laity its own characteristics, since by divine vocation we layfaithful must live in the world and strive there for the fullness of life in holiness.

Paul VI, in a memorable speech to the National Assembly of Italian Catholic Action, emphasizes the particular relevance of Catholic Action in the constitutional design and operational program of the Church and reaffirms the formative commitment of its members. He summarizes his thought with the happy expression "Catholic Action must be a School of holiness".

During the First Ordinary Assembly of IFCA, held in Vienna in November 1994, the Servant of God Cardinal Eduardo F. Pironio, then President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, made his speech on "The path of Catholic Action in the Church and the world in the light of Christifideles laici, for the new evangelization".

On this occasion Card. Pironio resumed Paul VI's definition of Catholic Action as a school of holiness, immersed in a Church that is a mystery of missionary communion and in the light of Christifideles Laici. He indicates three characteristics for Catholic Action: **FORMATION, COMMUNION, AUDACITY AND PROFECY OF THE SPIRIT.**

Let us see briefly what each of these characteristics consists of so that Catholic Action can be a School of Holiness.

I. INTEGRAL, INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

- A formation **for affective and effective communion** with the pastors, at parish and diocesan level, communion with the different realities of the People of God. A particular ecclesial sensitivity and capacity for communion with the various forms of association: movements, groups, associations.
- A formation for the unity of faith and life, so that the explicit proclamation of Christ is linked to witness.
- A formation **for the building of mature ecclesial communities** and a formation **about the Social Doctrine of the Church** that enlightens action in the different areas of life.

II. COMMUNION

Communion is both at the beginning and at the end of the new evangelization. "Communion is missionary and mission is for communion" (CFI 32). Pironio emphasizes here that for Catholic Action, this call to ecclesial communion and this missionary mandate is a special characteristic that is concretized in

- **Living in intimate communion with the Trinity** who dwells there. Intensifying the spiritual life with Lectio Divina and in the Eucharist; communion grows and is manifested in the measure in which it is lived "in Christ Jesus" and "in the Holy Spirit";
- **Living with particular devotion the Mystery of the particular Church** that is fulfilled in the Diocese and in the Parish, in communion with the universal Church. This is living the Church, feeling the Church, loving the Church, in its concrete, immediate, total reality.
- **Participating actively in the pastoral care of the Diocese** and being evangelically present in the world, sharing the suffering and hope of men and reading with faith the new signs of the times to bring them to the Pastors and interpret them together.
- **Discovering and occupying the new areas** where the Church must proclaim the Good News: the media, the field of culture, sports, the world of work and leisure. To create spaces of presence, of witness, of missionary evangelization.

III. THE AUDACITY AND PROPHECY OF THE SPIRIT

The new evangelization requires burning witnesses and credible prophets. Daring and prophecy are necessary, and for this it is necessary to take into account some characteristics of a lay spirituality that are very specific to Catholic Action:

- **The contemplative dimension** of every apostolic and missionary activity.

It is an inner need of the Spirit that dwells in us. The Spirit makes us prophets. This contemplative dimension presupposes

The continuous meditation of the Word of God; Lectio Divina;

Contemplative prayer that presupposes moments of silence and prayer, of pure experience of God in nature, at work, in the poor, on the cross;

Love for the desert, solitude, retreat. Today there is a hunger for silence, for the search for God in the desert, for prayer.

- **The spirituality of the Incarnation.**

Contemplation does not distance us from reality; on the contrary, it introduces us into it and creates in us deeper capacities to take on the suffering of men. The contemplative dimension makes us profoundly serene, luminous and transparent. Closer to the poor and fuller of the audacity and prophecy of the Spirit. That is, more capable of denouncing injustice, fighting violence and proclaiming the transforming power of the Spirit.

- **Daily growth in sacramental life**

Catholic Action has helped us to discover the inexhaustible richness of Baptism and our fundamental vocation to holiness.

To live the Christian novelty of Baptism in active participation in the Eucharist; to allow ourselves to be purified by the renewing grace of Reconciliation and to renew every day the ever-active strength of Confirmation. But not to remain comfortably installed before a God who makes us happy, but to go every day into the world with the renewed ardor of the Holy Spirit to proclaim Jesus explicitly and build his Kingdom.

We ask the Spirit to support and strengthen us to make effective these three characteristics of a Catholic Action School of Holiness.