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Presentation of Ugo Borghello's book:
CARISMATIC COMMUNION IN PARROCCHIA
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In the history, Church's periods of crisis are always coinciding with the times of birth of new forms of consecrated life, and commitment of testimony. And today it is no different: the renewal of religious life, the various movements that have arisen in recent decades, the new experiences of parishes ... These are all expressions of gifts of the Holy Spirit (charisms) that the Lord, in his generosity, never misses.

Ugo Borghello, in his volume *New evangelization and parish communion in the parish* (Cantagalli editions), has proposed a stimulating hypothesis, namely that the renewal of pastoral care moves mainly through the promotion of Christian experiences characterized by a primary belonging to the community.

One can belong to a Christian community in different ways, with more or less solid ties; But if we want a community to be alive, there must be at its center a sufficiently significant nucleus of people who have chosen to belong to the community as their origin before their identity and, therefore, their activity. In turn, this type of membership presupposes the radical nature of the choice of faith considered as the horizon of life within which all other choices and all other affiliations are placed and taken into account.

Borghello notes that all men, even the most individualists, feel the strong need to be recognized by others; in particular they need to feel known and appreciated by a circle of people who make up for them a mirror in which they recognize their value and its significance. Original sin has operated an optic shift: instead of recognizing in its image before God, man tends to evaluate himself in his image in front of others.

The importance of this recognition is measured by the sacrifices that people are willing to do in order to obtain social approval. Ideologies and sects, peer groups, but also politically correct, drag millions of people and largely determine their choices, their own way of thinking.

Should we only remain passive witnesses to this phenomenon? In Latin America and Africa, evangelical communities, which relate to Jesus and his gospel, have been developed and continue to evolve, but they develop in forms far from traditional churches. This fact shows that the attraction force of the Christian faith has not disappeared, but it also shows that traditional forms of belonging to the Church are no longer enough.

For many of our Christians, membership in the Church is anonymous; Should they decide to move away, it would not be a traumatic choice for them, nor would the others notice such authentic 'loss' of the community. This type of belonging is too weak to face the challenges of contemporary culture. We need to promote a more thoughtful, more conscious, more personal membership. Is it possible? It is possible if the gift of the Spirit is welcomed deeply; And the gift of the Spirit is deeply welcomed if it becomes a force of concrete, fraternal brotherly love.

"The multitude of believers was one heart and one soul" says Saint Luke describing the first community of Jerusalem. And precisely for this reason, "the apostles gave a strong testimony of the Lord's resurrection." The announcement of *kèrygma* ("The Lord has risen!", "(Risen) Jesus is the Lord!") Has his strong conviction in the kind of new experience that promotes and transmits: an experience of proximity, friendship, oblation, hope sharing .

Generic exhortations to the coherence of life are not enough; We must offer the possibility of a journey that seriously tends to holiness (i.e. to continuous growth in love) along with other people known by name, loved and served sincerely. Everyone feels responsible for being first of all a serious Christian, and feels responsible for the journey that other Christians walk along with him.

One can choose Jesus and his succession only with others walking together with him. Too many Christians have never decided to be Christians and they are content with a socio-sacral belonging that does not penetrates the charism of holiness. If one sees the importance of primary belonging, it opens up the possibility to engage many people - starting with the young - on a path consistent with universal calling to holiness. Charismatic realities have in fact found such way; It is necessary that even the territorial Christian communities (the parishes in the diocese) make the same discovery and build around the nucleus of people for whom membership of the Christian community is a form of primary belonging.

Of course, the risk of feeling better will arise. But the presence of a risk does not erase the necessity and the value of a certain choice; old popular wisdom taught: "nothing ventured, nothing gained".

It is important to propose a Christian choice according to the gospel; But it is equally important to sustain the charismatic momentum, interpersonal relationships, and experiences "from the bottom". The institutional dimension, precious in a widespread reality such as the Church, can only find lifeblood if it is supported by multiple, living spiritual experiences. In this volume, Borghello gives some brief, but fundamental, indications, in order to avoid, as far as possible, the overthrow of charisma. For priests there is stimulating material to reflect.