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FAITH AS A JOURNEY



What is faith? A journey that begins when God sows in our life the absolute newness of his creative Word. This Word transforms our daily existence into a great “journey of faith.” The “place” par excellence of a journey is the road, along which are hidden many questions concerning life and death; questions that open the door to God and love, to mystery and the future, to one’s identity and the identity of others. Road and faith—a unique and closely entwined binomial.

A traveler perceives the whispers, presence and mysterious movements of the Lord—the unknown wayfarer who walks discreetly alongside us, offering us the gift of his grace, friendship and love. To sit at table with the Living One means to break out of the shell that imprisons us. It means going beyond the rigidity of the Law. It means leaping over the barrier that impoverishes us.

The stories recounted in the Bible remind us that we are all called to go “beyond” our boundaries. Abraham’s walk with God forced him to leave behind the things that gave him security. Moses had to face dark and risky passages through the sea and desert. On the banks of the Jabbok River, Jacob wrestled throughout the night with a mysterious stranger. After his flight, Jonah was plunged into the silence of God so as to communicate his divine mercy. Mary of Nazareth made the long and tiring trip to Ain Karim to give Elizabeth the joyful news that the ancient promises had been fulfilled. After his encounter with Jesus, Paul of Tarsus inhaled the grit of the road for the rest of his life in his determination to spread the Gospel everywhere. This is our secret hope: that the gray and ordinary path of daily life

will become for everyone the path leading to a joyous meeting with the risen Christ, the Sun that illuminates every believer.

It is not our stamina or intelligence that will keep us going on this long journey but our ability to change. Faith seeks out people who are flexible, who are able to continually adapt, overcome adversities and learn the “new rules of the game” that life teaches us.

In his spiritual itinerary of conformity to the Lord Jesus (*Donec Formetur Christus in Vobis*), Blessed James Alberione, a master of the interior journey, says, “Coming forth from the hands of God and being called to glorify him in eternity, human beings must make a ‘test journey’ that is called life.” He says that this trip will end well if we follow the same route Jesus did as he walked among the people: he “went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed” (Acts 10:38). During our time on earth, we are called to leave self behind and adopt Jesus’ way of thinking, loving, willing, acting and speaking.

Our merciful Father does not abandon us. In his infinite love, he has given us Jesus, our Master, Brother and traveling companion. It is he who points us toward the truth, travels alongside us and becomes our life. The journey of faith always transforms the traveler into a blessing for others.

*Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk
and from your father’s house
to a land that I will show you.
I will make of you a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
so that you will be a blessing.”*

(Gn. 12:1-2)