

19th Wednesday of Ordinary Time. 8/11/2021

Fraternal correction

“If your brother sins against you, tell him. If he listens to you, you have won him over.”

This is practical advice to deal with disagreements and frictions that happen in the life of a community. When somebody’s actions disrupt the harmony or go against justice, we ought to talk to that person, to have a conversation, to clear up what is happening and look for a way to improve things.

But there is more than practical advice in the words of Jesus, who is speaking about how things are to be in the Church. As Christians, we need to develop a personal relationship and intimacy with Christ, but he also wants us

to walk in community. In the community of believers, we are guided by fraternal love. We have a mutual responsibility for each other, to help each other come closer to God. It is in this mutual responsibility and care for each other that fraternal correction takes place. When we feel offended, our impulse can be to get back to the other person, to get even or at least to feel vindicated. But fraternal correction is not that. Instead, it is rooted in charity.

Fraternal correction comes from a place of love. Love, because it aims to heal the wounds of sin, for the good of my brother or sister, and for the good of the community.

Fraternal correction comes from a place of humility.

Humility, because we know that we also sin, and we know that we struggle with our own weaknesses and

temptations. Fraternal correction comes from a place of prayer. Prayer, because our words and actions can be fruitful only united to Christ, when our intention is to help bring his presence, and to open ourselves to be the channels of his love.

I remember times when I have been corrected by close friends. It took courage from them, and it was hard for me to swallow. It was uncomfortable and we felt exposed and vulnerable. But it was a grace, and I am grateful for it. And it showed that they really cared about me. I should add, we are still friends.

In our journey to heaven, we travel together in group, in the community of our family, in the community of the Church. Let us ask God, through the intercession of St

Clare, to help us live in fraternal love. Let us ask him for the wisdom, courage and faith to offer correction, and also to be corrected, always in charity, for our good and the good of our brothers and sisters.

El Año Litúrgico Predicado por Benedicto XVI, Ciclo A. BAC

2019. Domingo XXIII tiempo ordinario.

The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary. Abingdon 2015.