

## FROM THE SERVANT GENERAL

### OUR THEME FOR 2009 (Part 2)

Feast of Christ the King  
November 23, 2008

My dear brethren in Christ,

Just as in past years, the Lord gives us our theme for the year, but it is up to us, through the enlightenment of His Spirit, to see and discern the lessons being taught, and the fullness of the message being given. This is why we need to bring our theme and the accompanying verse(s) to our prayer time, and also discuss these often enough in our household meetings.

I now offer you my further thoughts on our theme.

“God indeed is my savior;  
I am confident and unafraid.  
My strength and my courage is the Lord,  
and he has been my savior.”  
(Isaiah 12:2, NAB)

#### **The beginning and the end**

Our theme verse begins and ends with “God as Savior.” Indeed Jesus the Savior is “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Rev 22:13). Jesus is the be-all and end-all of our life and mission. That is why we are Couples *for Christ*. Everything we are and everything we do is centered on Christ.

Jesus and what he accomplished for us on the cross are the central focus of our lives and our mission. The cross is the very symbol of God’s love for us. God went to great lengths to redeem us, even sending His very own Son to an excruciating death on the cross. The cross is all about God’s mercy. God sent His Son even when we were sinners, even as we were the ones who caused him to be crucified, even as we continued to reject him. God will do whatever He can in order to bring us back to Himself.

And of course, our work is all about proclaiming this Savior. God uses us as instruments in order to bring His salvation to the whole world. This is a great privilege. It is hope for the world, and joy for His evangelizers.

#### **Strength and courage is the Lord**

The second line in the verse is quite striking. In living for the Lord and in proclaiming his salvation, our strength and our courage is not only *from* the Lord, but *is* the Lord. God

does not only give us strength and courage in order to fulfill our calling, but Jesus himself is the one, acting through us in his Spirit, who accomplishes the task. The strength and power are not inanimate things that are given to us, but are incarnate in a Person.

When Jesus gave his disciples the Great Commission, he made a promise: “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Mt 28:20b). Jesus is Emmanuel, the God who is with us (Mt 1:23b). Jesus is not a detached Savior, now in heaven, just looking down on his subjects doing his work; rather, Jesus is hands-on, he leads his troops, he directly engages the enemy in battle.

We know that nothing is impossible with God, because He is God. But we are mere human flesh. How can we do the divine work of God? Well, it is because it is Jesus himself acting in and through us. Thus, if we have faith that this is indeed true, then it will be as Jesus himself assures us, “Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Mt 17:20b). Now that is strength, and in that we can take courage.

### **Our proper posture**

Since we are mere instruments, since it is Jesus himself acting in and through us, since we can look to empowerment by the Holy Spirit, then we must be confident and unafraid.

First, we must be unafraid. The future is in God’s hands, not ours. The power comes from God, not from our puny selves. Whatever happens, God is there for us. The Father already offered His very own Son on the cross for us, assuring us of His great love. “What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?” (Rom 8:31-32). With God on our side, we need never be afraid.

Second, we must be confident. Even in the face of great evil in the world, even while undergoing severe trials, even in seeming defeats, we know that victory has already been won by Jesus. The fullness of victory and salvation will come at the final judgment. Till that time, we endure and persevere. We suffer hardships and oppression, allowing these to purify us and push us closer to God. We simply do our work.

Because of who God is and what He has already done for us, we face a future full of hope. Nothing can “separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:39b). We have got it made! So we simply trust in Jesus.

### **Let us move on**

Given all the above, we should give thanks in all circumstances, rejoice always, and pray without ceasing (1 Thes 5:16-18). We thank God for all He has done and for all the graces and blessings that we have received and will continue to receive. We rejoice in our salvation and in the privilege of bringing that salvation to the world. We pray always in order to be connected to the Vine, to keep the faith, and to grow in holiness.

And let us evangelize with a passion. Let us share God's gift of salvation to all. Let us proclaim Christ to the world.

“With joy you will draw water at the fountain of salvation,  
and say on that day: Give thanks to the Lord, acclaim his name;  
among the nations make known his deeds, proclaim how exalted is his name.”  
(Isaiah 12:3)

God bless us all.

Your brother and servant,

Frank Padilla