22/02/2022

Archbishop Ioachim on episcopal ministry in the 3rd millennium: Christianity is just beginning!



Last week, during the meeting of the Holy Synod, Archbishop Ioachim of Roman and Bacău held a spiritual meditation entitled “The bishop in the face of the challenges of the third millennium.”

“One cannot speak of the bishop’s pastoral strategy in the face of the challenges of the third millennium without a consistent analysis of the present and what it seems to promise,” His Eminence Archbishop Ioachim said, referring to the current context when “Christianity is no longer fought only in one of its foundations, it is targeted right in the heart.”

“The Christian conception of life, Christian spirituality, the inner attitude that defines the Christian; these are called into question. There is a total denial of Christianity and a dangerous tendency to replace it.”

Comfort seems to be a new religion

The Archbishop of Roman and Bacau observed that “the age of the third millennium seems to be one of the slavery of the mentality of comfort.”

“People are increasingly excited about themselves and the aseptic environment in

which they desperately want to live. The search for a comfortable life at all costs is increasingly becoming an undisputed personal and collective ideal. Comfort seems to be one of the new religions that man sometimes unconsciously shapes. It is promoted by globalism, technology, exacerbated consumerism. Thus, the man without comfort can be greatly terrified; face to face with reality and his own conscience, he would feel empty and powerless. Immediate satisfaction and comfort seem to dispel his fears and turn him into a happy enslaved person."

In times when the truth is increasingly claimed to be relative, "the bishop of the third millennium, in terms of the fullness of his grace, is the same as the bishop of the early Christian ages. However, pastoral methods must be adapted to the times, always taking into account their patristic and biblical structure," Archbishop Ioachim noted.

The Archbishop of Roman and Bacau further presented the bishop of the third millennium as a "model of communication and communion," a "hierarch in dialogue with the world," and a "charismatic preacher of the gospel."

At the end of his meditation, the Archbishop said that "the only way out of the stalemate in which the world has been thrown by the failure of Christians who have failed to be true Christians is a 'reconversion' of the world to Christianity, to realize that a renewed human being can only raise the world."

"This renewal must be the goal of the pastoral mission of the bishop of the third millennium."

Christianity is just beginning!
Archbishop Ioachim concluded his address to the plenum of the Holy Synod with the following prayer:

Lord, help us "rebuild faith," not only by reason but also by heart. Please help us to rebuild this map of the real world so that by it, by faith, we may know where we are going. Please help us to be loyal in faith but also godliness.

Lord, help us keep the monasteries, these settlements from another world, in this world of vanity. Monasticism, this phenomenon of culture from which, as a result of ascetic feats, magnificent theological syntheses arose.

Lord, help us let the divine word resound through our human language without losing its lustre.

Lord, help us understand that we cannot benefit from the Gospels until we fall in

love with Christ because Christ is not a text but a living Person who dwells in His Body, the Church. “God is not the content of a sentence, but a Person… Who left us a pattern of love”. And the content of love is not feeling or imagination, but power and Truth.

Lord, help us to see that sickness, no matter how severe, does not nullify man, and so the diseases of faith do not cancel faith itself, which remains the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.”

Help us, Lord, to enlighten and taste this tasteless world. Not to try desperately to light without burning because there is no burning light. Just as the candle loses nothing of its consistency and brilliance when it lights another candle, in the same way, the saints are like a candle. They consume themselves to light the path of others.

Give us, Lord, the strength to come out of our comforting salt shaker and become confessors so that we can say: Lord, Christianity is just beginning!

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