

Gianni's Prayer

PRAYER

by Gianni Marcheselli, partner in an interchurch marriage, during a meeting of the Secretariat of Ecumenical Activities on the Eucharist.

This prayer is like a personal confession that could be shared by anybody wishing for reciprocal eucharist hospitality for whatever reason.

Lord Jesus, you know that I am worried when thinking of your Supper.
I am unworthy of your gift, and when I am in Myriam's church and the Lord's Supper is served, I feel a great tension.
I am not able to kneel at your table with her.

I have studied all the documents, the encyclicals, the instructions of my church concerning this problem, I read thousands of pages of theology, ecclesiastical disciplines and pastoral care of Christian churches in the East and the West.
There is no way I can win. I must separate from the wife you gave me, right in the moment when we want to celebrate your Love for us.

The Tempter is provoking me, adopting, as usual, words taken from the Bible, and forces me to think of Philippians 3:8-9: "Only those things, I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have thrown everything away; I consider it all as mere garbage, so that I may gain Christ and be completely united with Him" However Paul was condemning the improper use of the Law in his time. Is it right for me to repeat his words, inspired by you, and fit them to my particular case? Is it right for me to judge 'garbage' what is prescribed by my church? If I did it, I'd break my christian's promises, with a sin of disobedience, falling down of the communion tying me with brothers and sisters, haughty position creating scandal, eventually the risk of running into the sanction of apostate.

Someone is suggesting some 'constructive transgression', deciding all by myself, ignoring my church law.
However who is going to authorise me to do a transgression? Is my conscience alone sufficient? Is it not too presumptuous? What guarantee do I have of the constructivity of my possible transgression?

You see, my Lord, there is a great confusion in the poor mind of this little Christian.
On the contrary, I should be happy to come to your table together with Myriam, smiling and singing, not perturbed by so many sad questions.

I remember having read in the 'Foyers Mixtes' journal of a young boy who, years back, on the day of his First Communion, in his catholic parish, was very sad, because his mother who belonged to another Christian confession, still in those days was forbidden to share

your Bread with him. He, without receiving suggestions by anyone, and without being noticed, when receiving the Host, split it and brought one piece to his mother, sitting alone in a corner of the church.

My thought is always going to your words reported by Luke 10:21: "I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned."

However I am not a young poy. I am an old man coming to you with bags of presumptions, unfulfilments, selfishness. All I can do is to ask for your help to understand; have mercy on me. You have always filled me with gifts. I dare to ask for another one. Put me in a condition to decide. All alone I am unable.

Make my decision a gesture of Love towards you, towards Myriam and my community.
Thank you, Lord. Amen.