



Synod  
2021  
2023

For a synodal Church  
communione | partecipazione | missione

**Reflection 7**  
*Following Clelia's Footsteps  
Toward the Heart of Jesus*

**Love with the Heart of Christ  
See with the eyes of Clelia**

**Luke 6: 27-38**

*But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit [is] that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as [also] your Father is merciful. Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.*

**REFLECTION**

The Master addresses “you who hear.” One must have a heart open to listening in order to receive the novelty of this teaching.

Jesus teaches that his disciple must love, bless, and pray for his enemies; he must break the chains of violence and greed, and do for others every good that he would like done to him. We might wonder if it is possible to truly live in this manner, which contradicts every rational boundary by which we order our lives. Biological life, which seeks to defend itself, moves in the opposite direction. Instinctively we want to be around those who love us. We want to pray for and bless them, not others. We just as instinctively flee those who cause us to suffer or who take from us, just as we take it for granted that others will return what belongs to us.

Our ability to put this teaching into practice depends on our relationship with the Lord, whose nearness to us makes us His sons and daughters, and like Him, participants in the divine life. We too can abide by this truth, live this love, that renders us mysteriously similar to our God. It is the Holy Spirit who makes this miracle possible in us, that Holy Spirit who throughout history always enlivens and renews humanity.

The only way to “learn” this way of seeing the world is to be near to God, to seek Him unceasingly. Only in this way will it be possible for a change to begin (in our hearts, our families, our cities, the world), to be filled with a generosity that brings about beauty and freedom from evil.

### ***See with the eyes of Clelia***

Clelia’s eyes were always fixed on Jesus, and from Him she learned how to love, forgive, and look at others with the tenderness of His Heart. There was never in Mother Clelia resentment or bitterness toward those who ousted her. Many incidents in her life give proof of how great her charity was toward those who had offended, maligned, deceived, and treated her unjustly. She always desired to forgive, excuse, offer all to God, and never to seek vengeance. She had the strength to look beyond this world, beyond the moment.

“Learn from Jesus how to love . . . . For love of Him you should always be ready to bear any wrong or injury, always forgiving and always ready to undertake any sacrifice for the good of [your family].”

“Practice charity with a kind and peaceful countenance, with an affable manner, with gentle and cordial speech; be indulgent in the use of charity, always taking the good side and interpreting everything told to you favorably, excusing others even at your own expense, as much as prudence permits.”

“Jesus wants me to treat everyone with respect and goodness and to find my happiness in showing delicate attention and loving kindness. . . . He wants me to suffer any rebuke, insult, rudeness, or slight from others without complaining and without doing anything to make anyone suffer.”

“Jesus wants me not only to forgive from my heart all the wrongs received from my offenders, but to seek to do them as much good as possible, especially to pray much for them, to be compassionate with them and to excuse them, desiring that they too take part in His heavenly glory. He wants me to pray always for those who are the cause of my suffering, never speaking of their faults. He wants me to love those who have offended me, as He has loved us.”

“You must love Jesus with all your strength, without holding anything back for yourself.” “Place your body and soul into the hands of that powerful heavenly Doctor who is the Heart of Jesus.” “May the Heart of Jesus be your All.”

“Offer the Heart of Jesus your every sacrifice, your every word, your every action.” “Why are you so worried about things that have no substance? ‘Think of me,’ Jesus tells us, ‘and I will look after you and everything that concerns you.’” “Trust in the Heart of Jesus and you will see miracles.”

## POPE FRANCIS

“The *gaze* of Jesus is not a neutral one — or worse, a cold and detached one, because Jesus always looks with the eyes of the heart. And his heart is so tender and filled with *compassion*, that he is able to understand even the most hidden needs of people. Moreover, his compassion does not simply suggest an emotional response toward people in situations of distress. It is much more. It is God’s attitude and predisposition toward mankind and its history. Jesus appears as the fulfillment of God’s concern and care for his people.”

“**We all need the Word of truth** to guide and illuminate our way. Without the truth which is Christ himself, it is not possible to find the right direction in life. When we distance ourselves from Jesus and his love, we become lost and life is transformed into disappointment and dissatisfaction. With Jesus by our side, we can proceed with confidence and overcome all trials, advancing in love toward God and neighbour. Jesus gave himself for others, thus becoming an example of love and service for each of us.”  
(*Angelus*, July 22, 2018)

- **How committed are you?**
- **Is the Heart of Jesus at the center of your life?**
- **Do you look at everything with the tenderness of the Heart of Jesus as Mother Clelia did?**

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## SHARING – TESTIMONIES

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, teach us to see with the eyes of our heart and reveal to us that which truly matters, because with a pure and holy gaze we may walk with you each day. Lord Jesus, grant that we may know how to turn our eyes from vain things; heal our gaze so that it not be empty and superficial. Show us the path we must follow and help us to arrive at the goal set before us. Amen!*

