GOD'S GRACE IN THE DARKNESS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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[...] the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Beloved in Christ the Lord, on this Second Sunday of Advent we hear a passage from the Epistle of Saint Paul the Apostle to the Romans, and we hear the words: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Ghost." And as we observe this truly satanic year [?] that surrounds us, as we observe this tsunami of evil and godlessness flooding us from every side, we may wonder: is there still some spark of hope in the modern world? Where are we to look, in this godless environment, hostile to Christ and His followers, for the hope of which Saint Paul the Apostle writes?

My dear brethren, the source of this Christian hope, which should fill our hearts in all circumstances, is God Himself. And today I would like to point you, my dear brethren, to just such a spark of hope, and to present to you the story of a certain eighteenth-century princess. You will think to yourselves: what can some aristocrat who lived in the eighteenth century possibly have in common with our fate, with what afflicts us? But, my dear brethren, as you will see in a moment, contrary to what may seem the case, she may have very much in common with us, and her example can be for all of us a source [...] and show that in no circumstances may we fall into despair and doubt, because God's grace works even in the greatest darkness.

DANGER OF BIG CITIES

Elizabeth of France, in 1789, when the French Revolution broke out, which in truth ought to be called the anti-French revolution, was only 25 years old, yet by her courage and her wisdom she surpassed all the royal advisers put together. We must realise that this so-called French revolution was one of the milestones in the process of building a new world order, which today, my dear brethren, is to be brought to its culmination. This revolution, which is presented in history lessons in a mendacious way as a great benefaction, as a great achievement of French society, was one great crime against the French, one great crime against God's order, because the aim of the revolutionaries was to turn the whole of God's order upside down, to rotate it by 180 degrees and to replace it with a new world order.

And Elizabeth of Bourbon understood this perfectly already in 1789, on the threshold of the French Revolution. Although she was urged by her brother, although she had the possibility, although she could,

My dear brethren, Elizabeth of France, Elizabeth of Bourbon, of whom I want to say a few words to you today, was the full sister of Louis XVI. She grew up, my dear brethren, at the royal court at Versailles. As you can guess, an eighteenth-century court was not, to put it delicately, an ideal place in which to become a saint. She was surrounded by court intrigues, plots, hatred, envy, debauchery, drunkenness, the squandering of money, greed, and in spite of that, my dear brethren, she kept a true, living faith and grew up in those unfavourable, dark circumstances. This was so because she led a life of prayer, began each day with holy Mass, and during the day remembered to give worship to God, one in the Holy Trinity, to entrust to Him all her cares, joys, and all her actions. She imitated the very good examples of her close relatives, her aunts, one of whom was a Carmelite. So she had a good model, a good example, and she followed that example.

This is for us, my dear brethren, a lesson and a reminder that God's grace works in all circumstances, even in the greatest darkness, even when it seems to us that our surroundings hate us so much that we are unable to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ, because we are constantly being drawn away from that path of God. The example of Elizabeth of Bourbon shows that there are no conditions in which a soul that seeks God could be drawn away from God, if it truly desires to follow God's path.

like other members of the royal family, flee from France and find refuge in other countries, she understood that her brother needed her to be beside him, that he is a weak, uncertain person, that he is like a reed shaken by the wind, that her brother needed her witness, her words, her strengthening and encouragement. For that reason she did not take the opportunity to save, as it turned out, her own life, and she remained in [...]. After the capture of the Bastille the revolutionaries demanded that Louis XVI move from Versailles, some dozen or so kilometres from Paris, to the Tuileries Palace, situated in the very centre of the already large city. Elizabeth came to her brother and begged him not to agree to this demand of the revolutionaries, because she knew what a great danger a big city is, what a great danger it is that the king should become a hostage of a mindless mob that can easily be manipulated.

And this is another lesson, my dear brethren. We must realise that big cities are a danger to the soul, that this process of forcing people, under social and economic pressure, to leave small towns and villages and move to big cities is one of the elements of building the new world order. Because in a big city people live with a sense of having no control whatsoever over them, with a sense of anonymity, and in this way it is easier to make them do what is evil. The big city is cut off from the Creator and from creation; people live there without contact with nature, which is the work of God, in a completely artificial, man-made, concrete microworld.

And so, some time ago, my grandfather's neighbour told me how a friend from Italy, a lad in his twenties, came to visit her son, a student. They ran a dairy farm. He saw a cow for the first time in his life and began walking around with a camera, delighted at how the cow looks, from the right, from the left, from above, from below, photographing the moo-cow so that he could boast that he had seen a cow live. And he asked: "And how do you milk her?" At that the woman, realising that she was dealing with someone truly young, educated, from a big city, wanting to make a bit of a fool of him, told him that you have to take hold of the tail and start waving it. And the lad really did it: he grabbed the cow by the tail and started waving. She grabbed her phone and began filming him. He looks around: no milk is coming. What to do? "You're waving too weakly, too slowly." So he started waving the tail even faster, and still there was no milk. And you may laugh at this story, but it shows how far modern man is already cut off from nature created by God, to such a degree that he can be made to swallow the greatest nonsense, and he will believe it.

THE CIVIL CONSTITUTION

Dear faithful, let us go on. In 1790 the new, revolutionary authorities passed the so-called civil constitution of the clergy, which was of very great significance, because it was then that, in truth, part of the clergy fell away from the true Church. The revolutionaries demanded that clergymen take an oath of loyalty to the republic. The Holy Father called on the bishops and priests not to do it. And imagine: out of 118 French eighteenth-century bishops, who were certainly not examples of holiness, how many took the oath of loyalty to the republic? Four out of a hundred and eighteen. And I wonder, if the present-day French episcopate, the Polish episcopate, were to face the necessity of making a similar choice, what those proportions would be. I think completely reversed, or perhaps not a single one would be found who would oppose the subordination of Christ's Church to the decrees [...].

And Elizabeth understood perfectly that as a result of forcing or encouraging the clergy to take the oath to the republic, what is really happening is a plain act of betrayal, the same betrayal that Judas once committed. For that reason she herself, and at her urging her brother, refused to make use of the ministry of the so-called constitutional clergy, that is, of those clergymen who had betrayed Christ the Lord and had become functionaries of the republic. The majority of the French clergy remained [...]. The great majority of the French bishops paid for it either with their heads or with exile and the confiscation of their cathedral's property. They exchanged their cathedrals and churches for forests and cellars, they exchanged marble altars for wooden chests of drawers, and in this way Christ's Church endured.

One of those priests was Father Edward de Firmont, who became chaplain to Elizabeth of Bourbon and Louis XVI, and they [...] still today a few words. The revolutionaries understood perfectly that the source of

Louis XVI's strength, the source of his resistance to their successive proposals, is precisely that woman in her twenties, that she is the main obstacle that prevents the revolutionaries from breaking the king. So they brought about their separation; she was placed, imprisoned, in another prison.

THE KING'S DEATH

Meanwhile history accelerated. Louis XVI was put on trial and, by a democratic vote, declared a criminal and sentenced to death. By a democratic vote in which even his cousin Philip of Orléans voted for the guillotining of Citizen Capet, as they began to call him, hoping that by joining the criminals under the banner of "liberty, equality, fraternity" he would gain some personal profit. He miscalculated, because before long he himself lost his head.

Meanwhile Louis XVI awaits the carrying out of the sentence and demands that before his death he be given the possibility of receiving the last ministrations of a Catholic priest. A Catholic priest, that is, one who had not taken the oath of loyalty to the republic. And imagine, the criminals of that day still had in them enough remnants of conscience that they admitted to Louis XVI his chaplain, Father Edward de Firmont, with whom he spent his last night in [...]. He went to confession and wrote farewell letters to his family. In the morning Father de Firmont said holy Mass, Louis XVI received holy Communion for the last time and, accompanied by the priest, went to the place of execution.

And so I set this behaviour of those criminals beside the behaviour of today's lovers of sanitary regulations, when I, as a Catholic priest, repeatedly had enormous problems getting into hospitals with my ministry, in a Catholic country, supposedly governed by Catholics, where dying people, gravely ill people, were refused that last consolation that flows from meeting a priest of Christ.

Louis XVI was guillotined as a great criminal, an enemy of the revolution, and Elizabeth had to reckon with the fact that she would share his fate. She sat imprisoned. The revolutionaries burned with satanic hatred for her, seeing the strength dwelling in a woman in her twenties, a strength flowing from the Catholic faith, a strength that they were unable to understand, unable to grasp. While she was in prison she wrote down the words of a most beautiful prayer, which is for us another lesson flowing from the example of her life, the words of a prayer which we could learn by heart and which we could make our own prayer:

"O my God, I do not know what is to befall me today, but what I do know is that nothing will befall me that has not been foreseen by You from all eternity, and that is enough for me. O my God, that I may be at peace, I adore Your eternal designs, I submit to them with all my heart, I desire all of them, I accept them all, and I offer You everything in sacrifice, uniting myself with the sacrifice of Your beloved Son, my Saviour, asking You through His most Sacred Heart and through His infinite merits for perseverance in trials and for perfect submission to all that You will and permit."

SCAFFOLD AND ALTARS

Elizabeth of Bourbon was given the opportunity to prove with her own blood that the prayer she had written was not mere empty words. She was brought before the revolutionary tribunal and, in just as lawless and cruel a manner, having nothing to do with justice, she was condemned to death. She asked, like her brother, that before the sentence was carried out she might receive the ministry of a Catholic priest, but this time, out of their hatred, the revolutionaries refused her that.

The day came, 10 May 1794. She put on a white dress, which was meant to emphasise that she is an innocent victim of a criminal system, and in the company of 23 other condemned prisoners she was driven to one of the Paris squares. When she arrived at the place of the crime that was soon to be committed, behold, in the crowd she saw the familiar face of Father Edward de Firmont, in disguise, who gave her a last absolution and accompanied her in the hour of death. Elizabeth herself did not let herself be frightened. Those who wanted her dead were probably counting on that, since they made her wait as the last one to be executed. She watched 23 heads fall onto the Paris cobblestones; those poor condemned ones she comforted to the last moment, embracing them, calling

them to faith in God's mercy, and, while they were being murdered, praying for them the psalm *De profundis*: "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice." And after each execution, after each crime, the Paris mob shouted: *Vive la Révolution!* Long live the revolution!

Until the turn came of the Bourbon princess, who stepped onto the scaffold and was murdered like a criminal. When her head fell, then in the Paris crowd no one shouted *Vive la Révolution*, because even that people realised that they had just become participants in a plain crime, a murder committed on an innocent woman, whose only crime was that she wished to remain faithful to Christ's Church, that she wished to remain faithful to the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, that she would not agree to any compromise with the criminals who wanted to overthrow God's altars and turn God's order upside down.

The beatification process of Elizabeth of France was [...], but it was also halted, because how could it be, in the post-conciliar Church, to raise onto the post-conciliar little table someone like that, a victim of a criminal, godless revolution? How is that to be done, when the Second Vatican Council itself, as one of the French cardinals described it [...], was the French Revolution in the Church. The spiritual sons of those criminals of 1789 brought about the revolution in the Church, called the Vatican Council. The spiritual sons of those criminals hold the helm of the post-conciliar Church today. The spiritual sons of those criminals are creating today, under the aegis of the World Economic Forum, a new world order, wishing to complete the work that they began more than 200 years ago.

But, my dear brethren, soon there will come such a day when their criminal, godless plans will lie in ruins, and there will come such a day when Elizabeth of Bourbon will be raised to the Catholic altars and will be for all of us a witness that God's grace works even in the greatest darkness. And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Ghost. [...] the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.