

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS - 5. "TRACES OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE"

In the last text of School of Community, Father Giussani wrote: "The historical encounter with this man constitutes an encounter with the resolving and clarifying point of view of human experience. It is precisely this encounter that we wish to attain once again." (Traces of the Christian Experience—Worksheet 5)

While we are often in contact with many people, rarely does it happen that we have "an encounter". It is an event precisely when, within the faces that we thought we already knew, we begin to have the same experience that the disciples had with Jesus. This was discovered by Camilla, who wrote to one of her elder friends: "I can know Christ through you all, I can encounter Him only through the people whom He has fascinated."

Has this event, at least in its first unmistakable flashes, happened to you?

Hi Pepe!

For a long time I have been asking myself why I continued to come to *raggio* or, more radically, why I follow the Catholic faith; this was due to the fact that every time I ran into a difficulty, I did not understand the reasons for it even if the reason was right in front of me. In essence, it seemed like the one who had put me in front of that particular circumstance had it in for me. Nothing went my way, and I always felt betrayed.

Living this situation, I looked for a thousand other things to cling to. The problem was that going to GS, I felt even worse, because I went to *raggio* and heard people talk about the One who I thought had betrayed me, talking in a way that for me was not true. Everyone spoke about encountering Him and I remained perplexed because it had not happened to me. This whole dynamic reached its apex about a year ago. From that point I was a bit resigned to it, but the question still remained.

What happened on the winter vacation is that in reality what I expected was something surreal. That is, in the end, the encounter with Christ has always happened through a witness, starting from the first ones who met Him, who then passed it on to others whom they met, and so on. And I was thinking that the encounter should have happened in who knows what other way. I realized this when I encountered the figure of Saint Francis, in whom it is impossible not to recognize the encounter he had with the person of Christ, which started from the people he met during his life.

Francis, like all the Saints, is a person through whom we encounter the person of Christ. But Francis didn't become a Saint right away, he was a normal person who at a certain point in his life had an encounter that changed his life; this happens and has happened to so many people. Some of these are my friends, teachers, my parents, you (etc.) and through you who are with me (for good or for bad, every day) I can verify this encounter. I can know Christ through you all, I can encounter Him only through the people whom He has fascinated.

Camilla