Prayer to the Virgin of Lujan

Cardinal Eduardo F. Pironio

Virgin of Luján, Mother of the poor and the humble, Mother of those who suffer and hope: You chose this place in the silent immensity of the argentine pampas, to listen to our prayers, to soothe our hearts and to tell us about your Son "the Saviour of yesterday, of today, of always". This simple place is the spiritual heart of our people.

Today we have come to You, a small group of disciples, apostles and witnesses of Your Son, gathered in these days in the International Forum of Catholic Action. You have always inspired the great undertakings of the Argentine Catholic Action and unforgettable militants and leaders of this providential apostolic association of the Church grew up and matured close to You.

Today we have come from far and from near countries. We are different faces and different cultures with a different language, but we understand each other in the same Word of your Son who says to each of us: "Here is Your mother". Yes, we feel You so, Maria, as our Mother and our Lady. We only ask You to look at us and to listen to us. We have so many things, so many sorrows to tell You, so many graces to ask of You for ourselves, for our countries and local Churches! But we miss time and words. It is enough for us to have come here to look at You and to know that You look at us and change us.

We are young and adult people, men and women, who wish to live the Church in the heart of the world, as Your Son asks of us. Fully committed with the hour and the time we are living. We wish to live with calm, strong and humble fidelity, in close union with our Pastors – Bishops nad priests – with our religious and with all the lay faithful, the communion of the missionary Church. We feel ourselves marked with the Holy Spirit and sent again by Your Son to announce all the Peoples the Goods News of the Kingdom: the love of the Father. Through the faith we have fathomed the world we live in and through the heart of a Church-communion, we have committed ourselves in a dialogue and in making a journey of salvation. We do feel the challenges of this century which is going to end and the hopes coming from "the new" which is approaching.

Virgin of Luján, Jesus' Mother and our Mother: today we leave our uneasiness and hopes, our sorrows and joys in Your heart. We wish to offer You our poverty, our prayer, our joy, our hope, our love for the Church inserted in the world as a universal sacrament of salvation. We beg You to make us strong in difficulties and calm in danger. You well know what we need: a great spirit of contemplation to understand the poverty of men and the sorrows of the peoples; a great readiness to accept and live the Word of God, a calm fortitude to embrace the cross of Your Son and a joyful readiness to serve our brothers.

We wish to love the Church intensely and to live in deep communion with our Pastors. That we might be people who pray and missionaries. That we might accept the Word of God and contemplate it, live it and communicate it with the fire of the Spirit.

Most Holy Mary, help us to be faithful to our hour. It is a “dramatic and magnificent hour”, full of challenges and hopes. Lay faithful are needed who live the sanctity of their Baptism and the apostolic commitment of their Confirmation; who live with daily simplicity the Easter Mystery; who are afraid neither of the cross nor of the martyrdom. Who only live the joy of sanctity in the missionary communion of the Church.

Thanks Mother and Lady of Luján, for having received us in Your house, for having looked at us and listened to us, for having spoken to us and strengthened us, for having tought us “to be Church”.

Now we go back to our homes, our countries, our local Churches, with the certainty coming from these words of Your Son: “Here is your Mother” and carrying in our hearts the joy of repeating with You to Jesus Christ – of today, of yesterday, of always – these words of Yours: “I am the servant of the Lord: let it happen to me as you have said”. And we go back home, carrying Your presence as our mother who says to us. “Do whatever he tells you”.

So we will commit ourselves and so it may be. Amen. Alleluja!

Luján, 14 September1997