



Be United in the Unconditional Love of God

An Interview with Rev Bhausaheb Sansare SJ

“How do you see the “Major Crisis in the Catholic Church” today?

BS: Calamities and crises are part of human history: either man made or nature made; either internal or external. No crisis or calamities erupt suddenly; they erupt due to our negligence or knowingly ignore them thinking that nothing would happen immediately. The Major Crisis the Catholic Church faces today are mainly because we take the divine presence or the existence of God in ourselves for granted. Failure to recognize and accept the divine presence in oneself leads to the crisis which Catholic Church is facing today. We need to consciously, constantly and continually acknowledge the divine presence in ourselves, because in my opinion divinity and dignity go together; they are inseparable. Dignifying the person or giving due dignity to the person means to acknowledge the presence of divine in that person. The foundation for any relationship must be laid on the divine presence in oneself, in the others and in the entire creation. The moment we make the divine presence in us active, we will then become more compassionate and loving. Making the divine presence consciously and constantly active in us means exercising or practicing the virtues and values consciously and constantly. Every human person, who is alive and who has conscience and who is conscious, knows the virtues and values. Even if we exercise one or two virtues or values, namely compassion and love, we will then become better human

persons, and will become more flexible to exercise other virtues and values.

Exercising one or two virtues and values will eradicate in us the tendency to exploit or abuse or misuse other human beings and the entire creation. Major Crisis in the Catholic Church is erupting because we are taking the presence of God in us and in His entire creation for granted.

Do you think there is really decrease in the vocation to the priesthood and religious life? Your comments?

BS: Among the other reasons cited for a decline in the vocation to the priesthood and religious life, namely, we have nuclear families, we are not witnessing religious values or we are not living life worthy to our calling; the basic thing that I note here is that we, as human beings, are not responding to our basic vocation, that is, we are called to become good human beings. Crises existing in the families today are reflected in the general human society, as well as in the Catholic Church. We thus with all our strength and courage need to respond to our basic vocation and become a good human being, leaving no leaf unturned. I trust, together with God, good human beings will create good families; and good families will generate good citizens, good priests and religious for the Catholic Church. Respecting our basic vocation as human beings is a must to respond to the other vocations or callings.

What can the Church do differently to avoid the crisis and to learn from them?

BS: Firstly, we need to underline that we are the Church; otherwise the Church will sound as an abstract term. Every individual member of the Church must ask himself or herself following three questions: what have I done for Christ and for His Church? What am I doing for Christ and for His Church?

What I ought to do for Christ and for His Church? St. Ignatius recommends these questions to the retreatants during the spiritual exercises. A genuine response to these questions from every individual will be a self-critical evaluation, helping every individual to draw lessons for himself or herself from his or her self-critical evaluation to avoid the crises in the Church.

To avoid such crises the Church must, together with her other policies and guidelines, re-strengthen the practice of examen of consciousness and examen of conscience. This prayer, twice a day or at least once in a day will help every individual to live and lead life worthy of his or her calling. Our conscience will never betray us; it will rather help us to form our characters better, revealing truth of our life - truths emerging from our words, actions and behavior. Spend time and listen to your conscience.

What are your creative suggestions to the ordinary Catholics?

BS: We must trace the source/s of crises in human life. Human life cannot be nurtured in isolation; it needs to be nurtured in and with the presence of God, other human beings and the environment. Family is the setup where virtues and values, traditions and culture are exercised. Thus family generates better citizens, religious and priests. I therefore urge every family to remain united in the unconditional love of God whose beloved Son Jesus died on the Cross for our sins. This self-emptying, self-sacrificing gesture of Christ is the source of our life in God. Church Members and Church Leaders must consider the families as our mission collaborators and partners. The Church leaders and the faithful together must pay special attentions to the family upbringing, not as a judge or a punisher or a controller, but as a loving, forgiving and compassionate persons.

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