

THE TWENTY SIXTH FLOWER: OPPORTUNITIES AS TOOLS

How happy I am for the opportunities¹ that are provided to me through my daily witness to your Faith, O Lord! How happy I am when I encounter all kinds of people: judges, professionals, teachers, workers, rich and poor, believers and non-believers, people who know their faith and those who do not! I am so delighted when I have to stand to proclaim and defend my faith in front of people who know the Book, who heard prophecies and who worshipped you.

It is a great challenge to proclaim who you are in the face of those who think they know you. This is a wonderful opportunity to open their eyes to what they already have seen and to prevent my ignorance and innocence from tarnishing the Scriptures, the books, the Fathers and their faith in the only Father who made a covenant with them.² This is an opportunity to tell them about my conversion when I saw the heavenly vision.³ The repetition of the story of my personal encounter with you is overwhelming and it reignites me. It stirs up all the elements of my being. It enlivens them again and again. It is not a repetition of facts that happened in the past but it is a living action, a living vision that is directing, once again, my steps. It is a new illumination to purify my being and endorse your teachings.

These opportunities are tools of illumination for the listeners and for me as well. Every time I come across them, I strengthen and solidify my faith while proclaiming it to others. My arguments have become richer and wiser. The remembrance of the way I was and the way I have become is a tool for repentance and thanksgiving. I repent for the way I was when I was incomplete in the faith, and I thank God for the way I became by His grace and love. Therefore, my mission is to make those who listen to repent⁴ and turn towards the true God and believe in the Risen Lord, the Messiah who was proclaimed by Moses and the prophets.⁵

The listeners of these words think that I was drunk or became mad.⁶ Seeing what they are not willing to see, knowing what they are not willing to know and hearing what they

¹ Acts 26: 2.

² Acts 26: 6.

³ Acts 26: 19.

⁴ Acts 26: 20.

⁵ Acts 26: 22-23.

⁶ Acts 26: 24.

are not willing to hear became unacceptable and abnormal. They want me to see the truth but not follow it. They are unwilling to become Christians.⁷

Yes, O Lord, I am drunk from your words. I will do anything for you. Your words uplift me. They correct my vision so I may see that you are the Maker of everything. They teach me to value every being of your creation. Your words of salvation have added taste to my earthly life. They give my life its meaning and its purpose. My life became challenging and your creation became my earthly heaven. Your words have attached me to you and they have allowed, continue to, and will allow me to be in direct touch with you because your words are words of healing as they did for the Centurion's son; "The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed."⁸

How much more closer can a person get to you, through physical senses, other than by your words that touch his tongue and his ears? How much more closer can a person get to you more than when his mouth declares your word? Keep, O Lord, your word on my tongue so I may come the nearest to you.

⁷ Acts 26: 28.

⁸ Matthew 8: 8.