

THE TWENTY THIRD FLOWER: FREE FROM FEAR

My defense to your ministry of love is part of my witness to your faith. My clear and pure conscience¹ is the backbone of this encounter. I stand up to conquer all people because I am certain that I am a witness to you and not to myself. I live according to your teaching, your commandment of love. I spread your word entrusted to me through your Church who is witnessing and approving my labor in your name. I fear no one for I am not defending my standpoint but your standpoint because you do not support false teachings.

Yes, I know how I live. My conscience is clear to this moment. I wept in my weak moments and went through the baptism of tears for your name's sake. I lived according to your Word. Your Word was guiding my feet and illumining my soul to see in your eyes the face of humanity as you see it, beings created in your image. My labor is a service of love for people to know you. I need no personal gain, for every earthly order will vanish. I seek only a foretaste of your Kingdom while I am here. I enjoy your company.

I know nothing about the future. I wish and I pray that I can continue to live in a clear conscience. I wish and pray to have a living conscience, a vigilant mind contemplating you. I wish and pray not to fall from the ladder I am climbing for I don't want anyone to fall with me. Keep me under your support and protection, O my compassionate Lord.

My way of life has been, to this moment, walking along your road with you, so I can stand firm and defend the faith in you. I receive all the courage and power to respond to each situation and I benefit from all the circumstances I face.² This firm conviction does not give me the right to answer disrespectfully. Even though I am a follower of the Son of God, I still have to respect local dignitaries³ and the human hierarchy. I am still one of the people who must abide by civic law.

My defense is proclaiming the truth. It is a powerful message that may create a dissension, a schism in their judgment.⁴ My defense is not meant to lead into releasing me from these chains and from this prison. It is to free me of my inner self. It is to free

¹ Acts 23: 1.

² Acts 23: 6.

³ Acts 23: 5.

⁴ Acts 23: 7.

me from my fear. That is, I believe openly and clearly that any situation or stage of my life is an opportunity to evangelize my fellow men and let their conscience hurt them or even to condemn me, but perhaps it will lead them to Salvation. This does not worry me because I am revealing your message and my walk in life is according to your Word.

Life does not always flow according to my wishes. Things may get worse and times of hope may turn to times of despair once again. I nonetheless, put all my trust in you to save me from this tribulation and I am very confident that you will save me. My end finishes in you for as St Paul said to the Romans “None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.”⁵ This is the wisdom that I learned from all these tribulations.

I am but a vessel of your Word. My will is to die in your will. That is when I will be finally free. I will not be subjected to my desires but to yours. I will not be bound and enslaved by my limited visions but I will be free in your eternal wisdom. I submit myself to you for you are taking me into you. You are my companion and I will enjoy every moment; moments of joy and moments of sorrow for your mercy and love are sensed even in the darkest moments of life.

Even though my time of tribulation gets longer than it should, you are always with me. You are always living these moments with me and, in your mercy, transforming them to opportunities to contemplate you. I have to read you and solidify my faith to be your right vessel. I have to stay vigilant for any new mission and any new encounter. My life is full of these opportunities to witness and to minister your Word. Please guide me, O Lord, and direct my steps.

⁵ Romans 14: 8-9.