

## A FEELING RENEWED

Philippians. 2: 1-5

### The letter of feeling

In the framework of the experience that the Apostle Paul has with the church of Philippi, a church of old friends, with evidence of being "his collaborators in the gospel" ; a community of faith that distinguished itself from others because it provided a very committed support for the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles of Asia.

The tradition has called the letter to the Philippians "the letter of joy" for the numerous exhortations to joy that Paul makes while still in prison. This time we want to imagine this letter as "the letter of feeling", which actually suggests a "thinking-feeling" way (ontological dimension) lived in the community. This is a step beyond the antagonistic debate between feeling and thinking.

Again and again the writer will refer to that way of feeling that brothers and sisters need to share to become lights of hope in the world (1: 9, 2: 2, 2: 5, 3:15, 4: 2, 4: 7, 4: 8). But it is a thinking-feeling that also implies acting responsibly in the construction of new scenarios where the full life of all is the priority.

It seems that in the background of the story there were tensions and confrontations that threatened community action and the enterprise of the kingdom of God; but now it is exhorted to overcome those situations from its genesis: the community's thinking-feeling. A bit of it reflects our text.

If there be then any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; / Fulfil ye my joy, that ye think the same thing, having the same love, being of one soul, of one mind. (Php 2:1,2)

### Jesus Christ is the source of a new thinking-feeling

Faced with the weakening caused by the contest, the Pauline exhortation aims to pick up that new way of living, feeling, thinking and acting that they have received from Christ. We need remember Jesus thinking and feeling, feeling and thinking with the people.

Of course, those rhetorical questions have an affirmative answer: "yes there is encouragement, consolation, communion, compassion, in the new economy of the kingdom." Then that must be replicated in the community, facing the challenge of the world "Feeling and thinking the same" (Living in harmony) united by the same love, spirit and purpose.

It is difficult to imagine that Paul is inviting to standardize thought, because this is the apostle who at another time has encouraged to contemplate the complementarity of the body of Christ and the wealth that arises in the orchestra of the gifts that the Spirit has imparted to the church.

But it may be calling for harmonization by thinking-feeling from life in its multiple expressions. To weave colorful mosaics that express a rebirth of human relationality as a miracle of hope for this time. This is the way to undertake the actions of the kingdom, not from different trenches and interests, but from the life force among those who renew themselves by thinking-feeling together.

We overcome feeling selfish

This challenge, nothing naive, also invites the transgression of the perverse logic of power systems energized by selfish and inhuman feeling. The community rebels against this system from a sensitive but reflective position, its resistance is nourished by the good news of the gospel.

Do nothing through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, esteem each the others better than themselves. / Look not every one at his own things, but every one also at the things of others. (Php. 2: 3-4)

Overcoming rivalry and pride, dignifying other people, you learn to look beyond the myopia inherited by the power systems of this world. There are no private kingdoms, exclusive communities or preferred villages. Here the old question is resumed "Where is your brother and sister?" To seek to answer it, together, from the same feeling and thinking.

Such are the signs of the fellowship that today we demonstrate as a community of faith beyond the walls and borders that precede us. We immerse ourselves in the shared thinking-feeling, between us, our land and our neighbors. But we participate as eschatological signs of a new time that opens up in the world.

Emptying as the key to a renewed feeling

Finally, but not least, our biblical passage brings us back to the paradigm of Christ Jesus, once again challenging us to assume his feeling and thinking.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, (Phil. 2: 5)

This exhortation puts the community of faith on the same plane as Christ, capable of emulating his reflections, words and actions. It is the challenge of disarticulating the selfish feeling that prevails in the present century to articulate in the ironic deed of life where painful personal emptying (*kenosis*) is necessary for the life of many to flourish.

Be in us this renewed thinking-feeling so that inspired by the life and surrender of Jesus, we will find the strength that the present tense demands of us. There is still a way to go, how many things do we need to feel together in harmony? How many to discover in the thinking-feeling of God? how many others to undertake to join the initiatives of the God of life?

Be God with us, accompanying us to walk in harmony, moved by the same Spirit, in communion, in mercy, in purpose. Please don't stop of feeling, please don't stop of thinking, lets make these down the Christ inspiration. Please don't stop feeling, please don't stop thinking, please don't stop acting, lets do these in the Christ inspiration.

Amen.