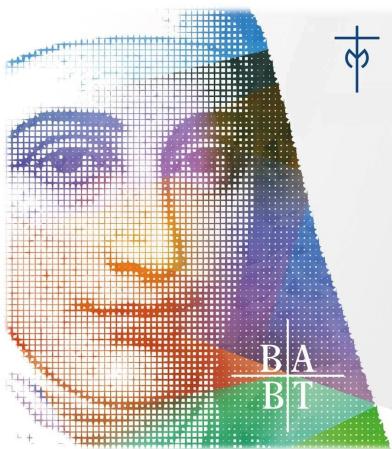


THIS IS THE FAVORABLE TIME

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IN ADELE'S WORDS – N° 2



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ADELE LIVED IN A CONSTANT ATTITUDE
OF CONVERSION BY HER BEING "TURNED
TOWARDS THE LORD" - HER EYES AND
HER HEART FIXED ON GOD .

"Let's search for Him now, for this is the favorable time. . ." (44.2)

How often has Adèle heard these words and lived them well! How often does she teach them to her friends in the little society and to her religious sisters! We discover this focus by the many times she quotes it in her correspondence. Sometimes in liturgical seasons, or to lift up spirits when an answer is lacking, or as a cry of alarm when pride or other temptations are lurking. She always invites us to not miss the moment of opportunity.

What were the ways Adele experienced it? Thankfully, her letters tell us much, because of the transparency with which she recounts her experience of God throughout her life. Certain '*favorable moments*' leave her with a special grace: the memory of her baptism, her First Communion, her Confirmation, the "*Little Society*" and her entry into the Congregation of Bordeaux, her meeting with Father Chaminade, her option to choose Jesus Christ coming before a marriage proposal, the illness and death of her father, the fruition of her "*dear project*" and the passing to eternal Life and meeting her Beloved.

These are some of Adèle's favorable times. But considering her whole life, we can say that she has welcomed and lived each day as a time of grace, a unique moment to respond to Love. She lives in a constant attitude of conversion in the sense that she is "turned towards the Lord" holding her eyes and heart fixed on

Him and burning with the desire to make him known and loved.

Fr. Joseph Verrier, editor of Mother Adele's Positio, a theologian belonging to the Congregation and responsible for the causes of her beatification and canonization, examined the writings of the Servant of God (Adele). He found that she expresses herself in these terms: "In the conduct of the Servant of God, as revealed in her writings, we have not noticed any impulsivity or uncontrolled feelings, elicited by emotionality. Her writings allow us to deduce that a serious self-control and a supernatural motivation, seem to characterize her exterior and interior conduct." And Fr. Verrier concludes: "It seems to us that the writings of the Servant of God justify a very favorable judgment on her moral character, in the supernatural sense of the term. Indeed, this true Servant of the Lord, reveals herself in them, from her childhood, to the end of her earthly existence, revealing a soul fully aware of the supernatural responsibility that derives from both her full Christian vocation and her religious vocation. She desires to be consistent in a generous and constant exercise of Christian virtues with a full fidelity without concessions, nor compromises to her congregation and her total commitment to the service of God and the religious state".



**"THIS IS THE
PROPER TIME TO
OBTAIN MERCY,
FOR WE ARE
GOING TO RECALL
THE PASSION AND
DEATH OF OUR
DIVINE SAVIOR".
ADELE DE BATZ**

My dear friend, does not the God whom we serve deserve our whole heart? Why have we so many reservations in what concerns him? God does not act so toward us, for he showers us abundantly with the most excellent gifts. He leaves his Tabernacle to enter our hearts as often as we wish. What abuse we make of God's goodness! Some day he will grow weary, and we shall seek him in vain. "You will seek me, and you will not find me." Let us search for him now, for this is the favorable time, these are the days of salvation. How God loves the offering of a young and tender heart! Let us offer ours to him, my dear Agathe, these hearts that beat for none other but him. Let us consecrate to him all our affections. We shall pre-

In Adele's words

serve the purity of our hearts only by directing them toward him. (44.2).

This is the proper time to obtain mercy, for we are going to recall the passion and death of our divine Savior. May his Blood not have been spilt in vain for us. During these days of salvation, during this favorable season, we must redouble our devotion, our hatred for sin, and our love of God. (71.4).

Because of the success with which the Lord has blessed your work, your salvation would have been in jeopardy if you had not been humbled. "Now is the favorable time, now is the day of salvation." (566.3)

How glad I am, my very dear daughter, to know that your

cold has finally left you, but your sufferings grieve me very much. However, dear sister, recall that almost all holy men and women have had poor health; this thought consoles me when I see my dear daughters suffering. Come, now, this illness will be for the glory of God and your salvation. It will have taught you how to die to self, to renounce yourself, to know how to obey . . . not an inconsiderable advantage! Courage, I see in this the will of God; you needed this for your advancement and your perfection. Profit fully from it, dear sister, and lose none of the harvest. Fill your barns with meritorious acts of renunciation. This is the favorable time, these are the days of salvation. (571.2).



Homily of Pope Francis, Ash Wednesday

(Basilica of Saint Sabine Sabine, February 14, 2018)

The season of Lent is a favourable time to remedy the dissonant chords of our Christian life and to receive the ever new, joyful and hope-filled proclamation of the Lord's Passover. The Church in her maternal wisdom invites us to pay special attention to anything that could dampen or even corrode our believing heart. We are subject to numerous temptations. Each of us knows the difficulties we have to face. And it is sad to note that, when faced with the ever-varying circumstances of our daily lives, there are voices raised that take advantage of pain and uncertainty; the only thing they aim to do is sow distrust. If the fruit of faith is

charity – as Mother Teresa often used to say – then the fruit of distrust is apathy and resignation. Distrust, apathy and resignation: these are demons that deaden and paralyze the soul of a believing people.

Lent is the ideal time to unmask these and other temptations, to allow our hearts to beat once more in tune with the vibrant heart of Jesus. The whole of the Lenten season is imbued with this conviction, which we could say is echoed by three words offered to us in order to rekindle the heart of the believer: *pause, see and return*.

Pause a little, leave behind the unrest and commotion that fill the soul with bitter feelings which never get us any-

where. *Pause* from this compulsion to a fast-paced life that scatters, divides and ultimately destroys time with family, with friends, with children, with grandparents, and time as a gift...time with God.

Pause for a little while, refrain from the need to show off and be seen by all, to continually appear on the "noticeboard" that makes us forget the value of intimacy and recollection.

Pause for a little while, refrain from haughty looks, from fleeting and pejorative comments that arise from forgetting tenderness, compassion and reverence for the encounter with others, particularly those who are vulnerable, hurt and even immersed in sin and error.

Pause for a little while, refrain from the urge to want to control everything, know everything, destroy everything; this comes from overlooking gratitude for the gift of life and all the good we receive.

Pause for a little while, refrain from the deafening noise that weakens and confuses our hearing, that makes us forget the fruitful and creative power of silence.

Pause for a little while, refrain from the attitude which promotes sterile and unproductive thoughts that arise from isolation and self-pity, and that cause us to forget going out to encounter others to share their burdens and suffering.

Pause for a little while, refrain from the emptiness of everything that is instantaneous, momentary and fleeting, that deprives us of our roots, our ties, of the value of continuity, and the awareness of our ongoing journey.

Pause in order to look and contemplate!

See the gestures that prevent the extinguishing of charity, that keep the flame of faith and hope alive. Look at faces alive with God's tenderness and goodness working in our midst. *See* the face of our families who continue striving, day by day, with great effort, in order to move forward in life, and who, despite many concerns and much hardship, are committed

to making their homes a school of love.

See the faces of our children and young people filled with yearning for the future and hope, filled with "tomorrows" and opportunities that demand dedication and protection. Living shoots of love and life that always open up a path in the midst of our selfish and meagre calculations.

See our elderly whose faces are marked by the passage of time, faces that reveal the living memory of our people. Faces that reflect God's wisdom at work. *See* the faces of our sick people and the many who take care of them; faces which in their vulnerability and service remind us that the value of each person can never be reduced to a question of calculation or utility.

See the remorseful faces of so many who try to repair their errors and mistakes, and who from their misfortune and suffering fight to transform their situations and move forward. *See and contemplate* the face of Crucified Love, who today from the cross continues to bring us hope, his hand held out to those who feel crucified, who experience in their lives the burden of failure, disappointment and heartbreak.

See and contemplate the real face of Christ crucified out of love for everyone, without exception. For everyone? Yes, for everyone. To see his face is an

invitation filled with hope for this Lenten time, in order to defeat the demons of distrust, apathy and resignation. The face that invites us to cry out: "The Kingdom of God is possible!"

Pause, see and return. Return to the house of your Father. *Return* without fear to those outstretched, eager arms of your Father, who is rich in mercy (cf. *Eph* 2:4), who awaits you.

Return without fear, for this is the favourable time to come home, to the home of my Father and your Father (cf. *Jn* 20:17). It is the time for allowing one's heart to be touched... Persisting on the path of evil only gives rise to disappointment and sadness. True life is something quite distinct and our heart indeed knows this. God does not tire, nor will he tire, of holding out his hand (cf. *Misericordiae Vultus*, 19).

Return without fear, to join in the celebration of those who are forgiven.

Return without fear, to experience the healing and reconciling tenderness of God. Let the Lord heal the wounds of sin and fulfil the prophecy made to our fathers: "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (*Ezek* 36: 26). *Pause, see and return!*

**"PAUSE, SEE,
AND RETURN".**

(P. FRANCISCO)



The Word of God tells us...

(*2 Cor 6,2*)

God says in Scripture: "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!

(*Rm 13, 11-14*)

And do this because you know the time; it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep. For our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed; the night is advanced, the day is at hand. Let us then throw off the works of darkness [and] put on the armor of light; let us con-

duct ourselves properly as in the day,* not in orgies and drunkenness, not in promiscuity and licentiousness, not in rivalry and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.

(*Jn 12, 35-36*)

Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the

light, so that you may become children of light."

(*Mc 13, 33-37*)

Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: "Watch!"



SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Individually: Ponder the readings from Pope Francis, Mother Adele and Scripture, noting their common elements.

- ... **Now is the favorable time...** (Adele) How is it time, my time to return to God ? Review and reflect on the experiences of the past week. What were the "favorable" moments and those that have not been ?
- The three words, **Pause, see and return** (Homily of Pope Francis) are a good focus for each day, and for daily review of our conversion process. How are you being invited to pause, look and come back to God ?
- Adele invites us to view what we are living as a time of salvation. How do you express this in your outlook and gestures, your words, your relationships? Ask for the grace to see the presence and coming salvation of God in everything.

In community : Share about Pope Francis' homily and what resonates with you.

Conclude with the prayer, « It is time again... »

Prayer to the Virgin Mary (Pope Francis)

Mary, make us feel your Mother's gaze, guide us to your Son. Form us, not as Christians on showcase display, but as those who know how to dirty their hands to build with your Son Jesus , the Kingdom of Love, Joy and Peace. We pray all this in the name of this same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!

It is time again...

Time to strengthen our love.
I hear Your words again: "Come and follow me ..." And this time my answer will be surer
I want to follow you, Jesus,
I want to make the most of this new opportunity
I need to get out of ordinary routines
To experience our extraordinary relationship.

Once again, I am reminded that you count on me, that I am invited to live every day with more love, more attention to others, More self-restraint to keep me free, and more moments of prayer to strengthen our love so that our hearts beat in unison

You know that for me it is easier : to fast from food, than to accept criticism to give alms, than to welcome those I don't like

to abstain from something, than to love more to sacrifice, than to give what I have to attend a liturgy, than to fight for a more just world. to act like a pharisee, than to work for unity

Lord, do not let me be first when I pray flaunt my actions remain comfortable with old habits sleep in general mediocrity feel too satisfied because I am with you.

Wake me up Lord! Let me love more!

Let this new opportunity not be in vain, may my heart celebrate as I renew my love for You.

Mari Patxi Ayerra



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