

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*I do not hear this from too many clergy today. It is good that a bishop use his authority to proclaim to us this timeless truth when others are speaking only of worldly issues.*

## **Bishop Eleganti: Jesus and the Church are ‘necessary for salvation,’ but this truth has been ‘strongly relativized’**

*In Jesus Christ and with Him and through Him, we are children of God. There can be no paradigm shift in the Church, no new teaching, no enlightenment that surpasses or eclipses all previous knowledge. No revolutionary insights in this regard are still pending or recent.*



*St. Peter's Basilica. Vatican City, Rome, Italy [Shutterstock]*

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The relativization of the salvific mediation of JESUS CHRIST is a widespread and worrying phenomenon, including within the Catholic Church. The “extra ecclesia nulla salus” (no salvation outside the Church) has been strongly relativized in our time.

**It is true that GOD can lead innocently erring people to salvation in ways that are known to Him alone. This is true because GOD offers salvation to everyone and wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. People who have never heard of CHRIST or do not really know Him for whatever reason do not simply form a “massa damnata” (a mass of people who will never attain eternal salvation).**

We should also think of the countless innocent children who are killed in the womb. All the necessary differentiations in this regard do not relativize the absolute necessity for salvation of the mediation of JESUS CHRIST and His instrument of salvation par excellence: the Church! **For no other name has been given to men in which they are to inherit salvation except the name of JESUS**, before Whom every knee will bow (in heaven, on earth, and under the earth). And the Church is His foundation and His means in time to come to men and to go through history.

**The universal and inclusive salvific will of GOD to save every human being and to lead them to the knowledge of the truth is therefore also related to the indispensable missionary mandate of the Church. The Church does not have to learn from other religions but to teach what it has received from CHRIST.**

In other words, it must go out according to the **Great Commission of the Risen One and make all nations His disciples and baptize them. That is the word of GOD! The Church is “Mater et Magistra” – “Mother and Teacher” –**

**of the nations.** She preserves the revelation given by GOD in time and carries it unadulterated to all people. Her sacraments are the supernatural elixir of life, which every human being shall partake of to be healed, because CHRIST gives Himself in the sacraments.

**In the Holy Eucharist, the love of CHRIST meets us directly. What could be greater than the Eucharistic union with HIM? “Oh sublime humility, oh humble sublimity, that GOD and GOD’S SON give themselves to us under the inconspicuous form of the host” (cf. St. Francis of Assisi)!**

**Alternative forms of worship cannot in the least replace the Holy Eucharist (“source and summit of Church life”).** Woe betide them if they try, especially not to emphasize the importance of the laity in the Church. In reality, this would clericalize the laity and desacralize the priest. This process of priest displacement by lay people in his place can be observed everywhere, right up to the top of the hierarchy.

The person who was originally supposed to assist the priest (the pastoral assistant was the post-conciliar achievement par excellence of the 1970s) now no longer assists the priest but replaces him. Even bishops are placed at his side instead of the other way around. This is indeed a reversal of the sacramental reality of the Church. Nevertheless, it remains true: **without the priest, there will be no Church.** Where he disappears or is marginalized, the Church is on its last legs. **This has to do with the centrality of the Holy Eucharist, which does not exist without the priest.**

**In its tradition, the Church has preserved and passed on the faith unadulterated. It continues to do so today.** The point of reference remains the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which was written by the bishops of the Universal Church in an astonishing editorial process and authorized by the Pope. **The Church does not need**

**interpreters who want to rewrite the Holy Scriptures with reference to “new” findings of the “human sciences,” findings that will be revised again tomorrow.** For that is what science consists of, not revelation. When even the views and behavior of Jesus are declared to be time-dependent and in need of correction, the pain threshold has definitely been reached.

**Baptism and the faith of the Church are necessary for salvation. Through them, we are empowered to be children of GOD.** This also means that we are not automatically and inherently already so, regardless of how we live or what we believe. How can those who explicitly reject and fight the mediatorship of JESUS have the FATHER? How can they be “children of GOD” in the full sense of the word? According to the words of JESUS, only those who have the SON have the FATHER and vice versa. So there is no way to GOD without JESUS.

In HIM and with HIM and through HIM, we are children of GOD, and we turn to the FATHER. **Relativizations are not appropriate here and they paralyze the missionary zeal of the Church. They are a false doctrine.** Missionaries like St. Francis Xavier made incredible personal sacrifices in order to save people for eternal life through faith and baptism. They were not on the wrong track, but we are if we think we can cut corners and do without it since everyone is supposedly saved by their own religion.

Why did GOD become man? Why did HE reveal Himself in His SON and reveal the full truth about Himself to us in HIM? Why did HE found a Church? So that non-Christians would stick to their traditional religious socialization? Is JESUS not an absolute singularity, namely the SON OF GOD Who became man, Who exists only once, and Who concerns all people? Does HE not bring any gain in knowledge about GOD compared to others, whatever they are called? “Philip, whoever sees ME sees the FATHER!”

**Yes, GOD is merciful. But He never violates truth and justice in His work of saving people.** This is what JESUS speaks of in many parables of judgment. There is no way around truth and justice. There is no heaven without passing through these doors. Anyone who does not pass the test, as at the airport with the metal detectors, will be rejected. They must remove or get rid of the obstacles that prevent them from getting through.

In the Church's proclamation, one term for this reality is **"purgatory," a "place" of divine mercy.** And then, according to the testimony of Holy Scripture, there are also those who absolutely refuse to go through the door that is JESUS CHRIST Himself. At any rate, the LORD speaks of a dichotomy in the outcome of the judgment and calls on His disciples: "Make every effort to enter!" **This effort includes the Church's effort to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to all people and to bring the sacraments of salvation! Nothing else is its priority mission, not social issues, however much it has always done the latter.**

**Sin is real, and its consequences for our life from GOD are obstructive and deadly. If they are not repented of, they lead to the loss of grace and eternal salvation.** We should learn again to abhor sin. Under no circumstances should we take it lightly, even though GOD's mercy is always greater than sin. **The sinner must recognize and repent of it in order to be able to receive the mercy of GOD with all its healing effects.** This is also what Jesus means by the "rebirth" from above out of SPIRIT and truth.

There is one truth. It is sometimes called the "hard truth" because it takes no account of our mood, agreement, or emotional state. It applies regardless of this. It also remains unchanging as a truth, irrespective of the coming and going of generations and their false views about it. **Our time has lost its sense of objectivity. Everyone creates their own world, their own**

**“truth,” which is only true for them but is not recognized by GOD.** If something is true, it remains true for everyone by definition, otherwise it is not truth. Incidentally, this revealed truth includes the fact that GOD created humans as man and woman and that the body defines us as such.

**The more the Gospel and the faith of the Church challenge us to go beyond our own mindset, the better.** The faith of the Church does not refer to personal views that we express on any given occasion but to what the Church has taught from the beginning and has preserved for all generations. **The truth or the words of JESUS are irrevocable and, according to his own testimony, remain for eternity.**

**The harshness of the truth does not come from those who uphold and teach the truth of faith. The hardness comes from the closedness of the heart that the truth encounters.** The same applies to the discernment of spirits for the sake of truth. In this context, Jesus spoke of a sword that will also divide families in their views of Him for His sake. This aspect must not be missing in the proclamation. The Lord is not a “softie.” He is kind and humble of heart. But HE remains the demanding and situationally uncomfortable truth without compromise.

JESUS CHRIST is the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In this sense, **there can be no paradigm shift in the Church that knows the Bridegroom, no new teaching, no enlightenment that surpasses or eclipses all previous knowledge.** No revolutionary insights in this regard are still pending or recent. There is also no new, different church in the sense of: “The former things have passed away; new things have come into being.”

**We do not know JESUS better today than believers before us. We have no deeper insights into supernatural truth today than the saints in earlier times or than the Church of the Apostles.** Anyone who reads the letters of the

Apostles can quickly see this for themselves. Technological progress has not raised us morally to a higher level. From a philosophical and moral point of view, we may even be low-flyers and ignoramuses of our own caliber compared to previous generations. **In any case, the beliefs of the Church that they have passed on to us are not in need of revision. We are.**



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