**09. The sense of touch**

In the other senses there will be, let's say, a certain kind of possibility, that is, the sense of smell. I will handle an odour that is present, however, with regard to sight I will have to go beyond the visible, with hearing it is all a matter of my humility, my willingness, right? With touch I will have to do a positive act, however, I cannot be the one to redeem my touch because if touch is a relationship issue, it will not be my quality that changes my touch, it must be the quality of another that changes me.

**Why did Jesus Christ become incarnate**? Why didn't God the Father Almighty send us a beautiful book? Because when we talk about touch we also talk about the mystery of the incarnation, the wonderful thing, the fact that we believe in a God who became skin, who took on the five senses. Why? To be in relationship, to have contact with us!

You think, **Islam believes in Allah's direct revelation** to Mohammad and Mohammad wrote the Qur'an under dictation, and a good Muslim reads and practices what God said - stop. Instructions! This is (the paroxysm of) Judaism**. Judaism held the law to be the centre of relationship with God. God tells me what to do and I do it. No?**

Christianity believes that instead Jesus Christ came and touched you, took you by the hand, he became vulnerable, so tangible that we could kill him and we killed him, that is, he accepted the worst of contact, deadly violence, torture. Christ was scourged, had a skin to be scourged. Because this is what changes man: a contact with Jesus Christ.

Touching the Lord Jesus redeems your touch! Because when you change -let's say you look at yourself as a mistake. Someone comes along and says to you **- you are the most precious thing in the world, you are worth my life.** All of a sudden you get the doubt that you're not really a mistake--maybe you're valuable, maybe you're a bearer of beauty.

You must hold on to your opportunities to touch Christ! That will change your touch, to be touched by him, to come in contact with him.

**So where do you touch the Lord Jesus?** In **prayer! In the sacraments! In the liturgy.** But do you know why in prayer we touch him so little? Because **we** are always the focus of prayer!

**Prayer: You are holy the Lord God, you are strong, you are great, you are the most high, almighty**, Holy Father... God of mercy... you are humility... you are...

Francis is gone! He stands in front of another, talking about him and this leads him to repeat one thing -- my God, my everything... He bears nails, tumoururs in his hands and feet that have turned into nails. Because Francis' Stigmata were not wounds, they were the appearance of flesh that became hard as iron going through his hands and feet and a bleeding wound from his side. Francis had the nails, not the wounds. Francis is the only saint who is left with the stigmata in death. All stigmata lose the Stigmata shortly before death, only Francis of Assisi has this thing here, in fact there is only ... one can think of The Sacred Stigmata San Francesco – a church of which I am happily titular - but one cannot think of Padre Pio's Stigmata because they were a *transeunte*, that is, transient. So, prayer is a contact with him, it's not an effort on our part, it's a putting on-- like sunbathing!

Being educated in sniffing means knowing how to make oneself a stranger to situations, that is, knowing how to go to the different room and come back, to go in as a stranger to things. **Being educated in touch comes from a constant relationship with the Lord! If you are accustomed to a contact with the Lord Jesus, then your sense of touch will sense the difference.**