

The Church is mistaken: Acceptance at all costs does not mean Integration.

by **Ida Magli**

Today the Church is in an extremely difficult situation, but does not seem to be aware of it. Starting from the Second Vatican Council, the inner crisis dramatically reduced the number of people belonging to religious Orders, both men and women. This not only affected the activities related to the cult, as for example the management of parishes: it also made somehow 'invisible' the life of the Church itself, an entity that in its spirituality was different from the body of the believers. Socially, this entity used to be very strong, with a widespread presence of Franciscans, Dominicans, Capuchin, Salesians and of their activities. Unfortunately, the very few clergy that remains is extremely poor, both intellectually and culturally; and more so because - at least in the West - it keeps repeating worn-out words in useless preaches, which are always the same. Or, giving up religious matters, they talk about problems affecting our everyday' life, which cannot be solved with the simplification of charity.

Let us say it clearly: it's been several years that the Church renounced to do *real charity*, since this would need a profound vision of the true causes of the misery affecting a great part of the world. It would also need a severe and clear condemnation of what caused and still is causing that misery. The agricultural crisis in Latin America and in Africa - for example - is due to the unrestrained liberalism of commerce, which kicked out of the market the less valuable products and the farmers who cannot face the challenges of global markets. The European Union was one of the major causes of the african hunger, when it started to fix the measures of fruits and vegetables in order to access its markets. But never once the Church has raised her voice to condemn these merciless market rules. Today, a great part of the migrations are due to the supremacy of Economy over any other value. To avoid that millions of people leave their country, coming to Europe, there is just one solution: reviving local markets. We do not need to have lemons traveling from Argentina to Italy, as it is today; this will also lower the pollution we are so worried about in these days.

The so called "front-line priests" are not able to think or to meditate about these matters. The Church must realize that it is not possible to take care of the poor with "front-line priests", and that with them the Church will not gain a greater authority in the West. But where will the Church be, without the West? Many seculars - both believers and not - are asking themselves this question; they are worried because they see that Christianity is becoming ever softer, and little by little is being submerged by Hebraism, Islam, or by that Tolerance that someone would like to be a sort of universal religion. This is the truth: blending together peoples with different cultures and religions, someone believes that we can reach a sort of cohabitation that will discolor the most vivid palettes,

leaving just a comfortable grey color. But the politicians who believe - or pretend to believe - this, are mistaken. The Church too is wrong, hoping to avoid conflicts just letting everybody's faiths live side by side.

The most evident proof of this are the so-called "Roms" or Gypsies. It's been so many years that we are trying to settle them down without success. They did never integrate. Their "*culture*" died a very long time ago. But a Taboo forbids to face this "*death*" with normal common sense: this is why we cannot help the Roms, making them acknowledge that living in a "*house on wheels*" does not mean to be "*nomads*"; that the "*nomad*" culture cannot consist in pretending that a city camp is like a tent in the prairie, and that stealing cars is like capturing wild horses...

They are *pretending* to camp in a metropolis like Milan with millions of inhabitants; and we are *pretending*, too, since we know that this is a ridiculous although tragic fiction. An example of this is the recent controversy between the Lega and the Archbishop of Milan, Dionigi Tettamanzi: he has been accused of not defending the crucifix and to make appeals only in favor of acceptance. Why the Church is not helping us and them to live in the "*truth*"? This is the Church's real duty, since this is the essence of the message of Jesus. *There cannot be charity without truth.*

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December 7th, 2009