

Homily in memory of Fr. Bruno held on 22.05.2021 by Fr Fiorenzo

What does joy have to do with the loss of Fr. Bruno? How to understand this paradox?

In the Gospel of John Jesus says: *“Because I told you that I will leave you, sadness has filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is good for you that I go, because if I do not go, the joy of the Spirit will not come to you. If, on the other hand, I go to the Father, I will send you the Spirit so that your joy may be complete ”*. How is it possible to associate joy and loss? Either there is joy and nothing is missing from happiness or loss comes and with it sadness. But the Gospel helps us to summarize the opposites. I can say this by referring to my experience.

The loss of my friend and brother Bruno hurts me: that's right, because I'm human. I suffer from the loss of him and a lot. But mourning can take two directions: I suffer from the absence of my dear Bruno and the endless sadness takes me. Or I get rid of mourning, I accept the emptiness that my friend leaves me in my heart and thanks to this test of indigence, which makes us poorer, a possibility emerges that sadness made unexpected, a joyful gratitude, more pure and profound everything that my friend Bruno has given me and that no one can ever take away from me. What was given to me by him will remain mine forever. I emerge from mourning aware that the gift of a life full of thought like his one is unforgettable, unmissable.

Mourning is not oblivion, which over time leads to something else, but it is a remembering forward, it is a remembering moving forward in life. It is as if mourning told us: "Remember to live". Meeting Bruno while alive recently inspired me with a peculiar, strange experience: it was as if he wanted me to let him go, I lived him as something other than me and complementary to me. I longed to converse with him: and the loss deprived me of an intelligent interlocutor; but I felt that he gradually wanted to move away from me. It was right that I let him go. He went away: I experience the detachment with pain, yet I feel it even closer.

To make you understand who Bruno was, I like the metaphor of the breath: Bruno is like the breath. Thus Christ said to Nicodemus: *“The breath, the wind blows where it wants and you hear its voice, but you don't know where it comes from or where it goes”*: thus Bruno, free son of the wind. Now born to the Spirit, to the breath of the Spirit. Your body, Bruno, has passed into the spirit. The book of the Apocalypse of the dead says it: *“They went in the Spirit: to die is to pass to the Spirit”*, says chap. 27

in verse 37. It is as if the body acquired the pulsation of the spirit, almost a dance, a leap that brings it closer to the breath than to the matter.

Bruno's body is now made up of openings: as when alive, a man of great courageous openness, he is now devoted to the encounter with God, the greatest possible openness to us: open to God, to me, to us as never before. He moved away so that he was closer to us, more intimate, breath ... free spirit in fact. Bruno was born in the free breath of the Spirit, as he was alive. Now he is present to us free in his going to him and coming without us being able to impose on him a specific place, identity or provenance.

Having reached his true self, his spirit of him, made a breath, he is no longer limited to any residence: he was born to new life, to the free life of the spirit and through this birth sadness is transfigured into pure joy. *“You will be in sadness, but your sadness will change into joy”*, says John in his Gospel. Then he continues: *“The woman when she gives birth is in pain because she came into the world her now. But when she gave birth to the baby, he no longer remembers the suffering for the joy that a man was born into the world. So you too will be in pain; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice and no one will ever be able to take your joy away from you ”*. I know that Bruno felt at the end of his life assignment and felt that he could go. Let him go: this wise man was born to life and was happy to have completed his task. We have to thank and rejoice. We will remember him by going on. It is his teaching.