

Novena for Paolo Last Day

From the Surat 'Āli `Imrān
(Family of Imran)

وَلَيْنَ مُتُّمَ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لِيَالِي اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾
فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَأْتِ بِعَذَابٍ لِّمَنْ ظَلَمَ وَلَا يَرْجُوا عَذَابَ اللَّهِ وَلَا هُمْ يُعْذَرُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾
فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

And whether you die or are killed, unto God you will be gathered.

So by mercy from God, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon God. Indeed, God loves those who rely [upon Him].

3:158-159 * Translation: Sahih International

Words from Paolo

I say, I believe, I think that peace is something to build with enemies. If you are only searching for what is similar to you in the Other, you are never going to make peace. Making peace means having curiosity, attention, openness for the difference. You have to imagine that you can learn something, imagine that you can be corrected in something by the Other. You have to believe that in this relationship there is a new dynamic. One can start making peace when the Other is still an enemy and when we are still perceived as an enemy by the Other. That is the moment to start making peace, to engage the peace process. And this requires to create room for dialogue, room for curiosity and understanding. [...]

Make room for those you are considering an enemy today and it will transform you. If I feel myself as being an enemy of those persons there, it is because they do not understand me, do not receive me, do not respect me and also do not let me speak or believe they always knew what I think. But if one of these persons asks me to say: what do you have on your heart, what is your aspiration, what is your desire? [...] Then perhaps the fact in itself that he is curious about me and about my aspirations is enlarging me and opening my heart. It is creating a room [...] and we go back home as a new man.

Interview with Radio France International, 2006

From the Gospel according to Saint Matthew

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said:

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Mt 5:1-12