



A Life given

Fr. Vincent Machozi was shamefully assassinated this past Palm Sunday. Death seems to triumph. We are all dismayed, traumatized by this event. How are we to understand this chain of massacres, of death and violence? Assumption has already paid a heavy price to the insecurity that has sown terror in North Kivu. Let us not forget our brothers, Edmond, Jean-Pierre and Anselme, who disappeared more than three years ago. Our congregation continues to demonstrate solidarity with the people of North Kivu and our brothers somehow continue their delicate mission there without giving up. It is our way of responding to the heinous attacks that have been terrorizing the Nande people, the largest ethnic group in North Kivu.

An Assumptionist is a man who demonstrates solidarity with the poor and the least among us. This solidarity is not some empty phrase. It also has a price, let us not forget. But an Assumptionist is also a man of dialogue. We are not motivated by a spirit of revenge, but one of justice. We demand that the truth about these massacres be made known and that justice prevail. There must be an end put to complicit indifference.

Throughout the world we have an obligation to take up the cause of the poor and the weak. Sometimes we can fall into a kind of comfortable complicity and forget that our life must be given for the sake of the Kingdom. A religious, like every Christian, draws his strength and inspiration from the Beatitudes and among these one grabs my attention in this time of suffering, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice for they will be satisfied."

In our religious family there are many brothers who dedicate their energies to the service of others so that their dignity may be respected. They are the honor of our congregation. The coincidence that linked the death of Vincent Machozi with the beginning of Holy Week served as a reminder that a servant can be no greater than his Master. We are exposed because our faith disturbs the forces of evil that seek to dominate the world. But we know that they will not have the last word. There is in Christianity a conviction that always prevails: life is stronger than death. The Lord's Resurrection reminds us that we are all united to the mystery of his death and life. Every time that we celebrate the Eucharist we call this to mind. May our lives become a living offering to the praise and glory of God!

Therefore, we must undergo death in order to know the resurrection. Underlying the word "resurrection" one discovers the word to "rise up" in the revolutionary sense of "to resist". The power of the resurrection is not simply for tomorrow but for today. In the midst of the violence that we experience, let not death triumph, but let us rise with St. John and say, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers and sisters."

Christ is risen!

by Very Rev. Benoît Grière, A.A.
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