

CHAPTER 5: SPIRITUAL COMBAT, VIGILANCE AND DISCERNMENT

While Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate: The Call to Holiness in Today's World* will take some time to digest and to unfold the gift that Pope Francis has given to us, the Holy Father reminds us that we are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves.

In Chapter Five, *Spiritual Combat, Vigilance and Discernment*, we learn that while evil is present from the very first pages of the Bible, we should not dismiss the devil as a myth, a figure of speech or an idea. Rather, our path towards holiness is a constant battle against evil for which the Lord equips us with prayer, the Word of God, the celebration of Mass, Eucharistic adoration, sacramental Reconciliation, and works of charity.

Here, the path of holiness is a source of peace and joy, given to us by the Spirit; a path that reveals itself through discernment – a gift that requires no special abilities, but it does require listening: to the Lord and to others, and to reality itself, which always challenges us in new ways. We need the silence of prolonged prayer to better perceive God's language, to interpret the real meaning of the inspirations we believe we have received, to calm our anxieties and to see the whole of our existence afresh in God's own light.

To be sure, the life of a Christian is a constant battle. We need the strength and courage to reject the temptations of evil and to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. God asks everything of us, yet he also gives everything to us. He does not want to enter our lives to diminish them but to bring them to fulfilment. In the end, we are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves.

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