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That morning, during the homily of the Anniversary Mass, D. Manuel Pelino underlined the role of Our Lady as a foundation for hope.” Recalling the episode of the Marriage at Cana, the Bishop Emeritus of Santarem called upon the pilgrims for the ecclesial communion through the merciful love of Jesus, mentioned in the message left in Fatima by the Holy Virgin after her Apparition in June 1917.

From the very beginning of the homily D. Manuel Pelino referred to the mercy of God when, mentioning the passage of the Gospel about the Marriage at Cana, he said that “the glory of Jesus is the good of the people, which is not lying in the power that dominates and orders, but in the mercy and kindness that free his sons and make them happy.”

In the allusion, the prelate highlighted the “role and the active collaboration” of Our Lady, who understood the need of the bridegrooms and called for the intervention of her

Son, and he also emphasised the actuality of this participation.

"It is Jesus who can offer the good wine of grace and renewal. He is the one who saves our lives from darkness, who gives meaning and fulfilment to our existence, filling it with light and gladness, in eternity and in our daily reality. It is the grace of Jesus that, in the marriage, endows the spouses with the strength and support they need to live in a fruitful and happy way the joy of this sacrament."

Mentioning several occasions on which Jesus, in his public life, took part to feasts, the Bishop Emeritus of Santarem recalled the importance of each of these moments in the enforcement of the Ministry of the Saviour.

"The Marriage at Cana attests the mystery of Jesus, who invites us to take a seat at his table. In the solemn hour of his departure to join his Father, in the course of the Paschal Meal, he enunciated the new commandment asking to love one another. After the resurrection, it is also in the course of a meal that he renews the promise of the Holy Spirit as strength and light to live the brotherly love and bear witness to the Gospel. The feast is a recurring image in the Holy Scripture that leads to consider the Christian family as a source of conviviality, sharing and happiness."

Recalling each of these moments, D. Manuel Pelino emphasised that, today, "we are the ones invited by Jesus to seat at His table, in the feast of His love," where "we can experience the proximity and the mercy of Jesus, the richness of his Grace which reinvigorates, the new life we received from Him, and the consciousness of the mission to bring all men together and build up a big family."

In this evangelising act, the president of the Anniversary Pilgrimage put forward the example that each Christian must give as a witness of "hope, joy and charity."

"Christianity is often suspected to lead people to fear, becoming an obstacle to the joy of life and to freedom. When faith is lived as an encounter with and a union to the Christ, the Christians discover that they are not alone and forsaken, God's love provide them support in their lives, they find an incentive to love, a reason to trust, a stimulation to build the Kingdom of God, and, at the last hour, the serenity and peace to set sail for the light of the Lord."

Reviving the episode of the Marriage at Cana put in parallel with the Apparition of June 1917, D. Manuel Pelino, underlined again the role of Our Lady as "Mother of Mercy", mentioning Her as an example and a foundation for hope.

And he concluded: "It is the mercy of God that Our Lady brought to Fatima, a message of solace and hope, of victory of love over evil, as she promised in the Apparition of June: 'In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph'. The grace and mercy with which God crowned the life of Our Lady are the foundation of our hope to be accompanied and protected by her motherly love. That is what happened at the Marriage at Cana and in Fatima... That is what is happening today, with those who believe in Him and follow Him, as Mary, her Mother, did."

The Anniversary Mass was concelebrated by four bishops, among which D. António

Marto, Bishop of Leiria-Fátima, who, at the end, thanked D. Manuel Pelino for the way he helped the pilgrims to contemplate and materialise the mercy of God, symbolised by the “refuge” and “shelter” of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, present in the Apparition of June 1917.

45 groups of organized pilgrims coming from 15 countries had registered with the services of the Shrine.

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