

The Texts of the Convivium

MIMICRY AND TESTIMONY

Every animal aims at survival. It gets its food from other animals, by attacking them; but, if it finds itself in conditions of inferiority, it breaks free by escaping, hiding or by camouflaging itself or by mimicry.

Camouflaging or mimicry, but how? Its bodies takes on different colours and shapes, so as to merge in with the environment, taking on the aspect of animals that are less exposed to those dangers.

Butterflies, caterpillars and various insects take on the appearance of leaves, and, in certain cases, precisely of leaves that have been chewed or nibbled on by caterpillars or with transparent areas as if they were filled with holes.

Also other defects of leaves, such as stains and spots caused by fungi or bird droppings, can complete the imitation. The wings of the insect that camouflages itself can appear to be crumpled or rolled up with its edges frayed or taking on the aspect of dead branches and broken twigs.

Furthermore, there are defenceless insects, that take on the aspect of species which are undesirable as food, or poisonous, or which give out unpleasant smells.

The practice of mimicry or camouflage also extends to human beings. Here the body doesn't change colour; even though the subject pretends to have a different one, in imitation of his political colour or of the Boss' personal ideas. The ideal thing would be to wear a uniform, if possible with a nice big letter M (or other) on his beret or on his heart.

One doesn't limit oneself to pure respect, to dutiful obedience. One behaves like the Boss' "man", like one of his "loyal followers", they

forestall his own thoughts, one becomes a “yes-man”, an opportunist.

Amongst “human rights” there is the “freedom of thought”: which is not only thinking what one wants by keeping one’s own ideas to himself, but it is the freedom of expressing them in conversation with others and also publicly. Freedom of thought is freedom of testimony.

Testimony is not your idle gossip in the bar or pub. Nor is it a long rambling speech of everything that goes through one’s mind. It is a discourse proposed with responsibility in full keeping with the ideals in which one believes.

Testimony is not exhibitionism of those who want to “to be seen by men”. It would be better that “when you pray, go into your room and shut the door” to converse with your “Father who is in secret” (Mt. 6, 6). It doesn’t concern exhibiting one’s own faith, but diffusing, spreading its contents.

The oil lamp illuminates efficiently when it is placed on the branched candlestick. Keeping it under a bushel, or under the bed, is giving a testimony that is good for nothing and therefore remains meaningless.

No desire to be in the limelight, but no shyness, no human respect, no camouflage or mimicry. And no fear!