



The Pope says that Christians are very concerned about the social, cultural and political consequences of their commitment, but they regard faith as obvious that is given by budget, whereas this budget not only does not appear as such, but even with frequency is denied. (1)

I have been strongly impacted by these words because we have often thought of ways and techniques to enhance the Christian presence in society, when what is really important is to strengthen our faith, to believe with the Church, to believe what the Church believes, feel ourselves as part of Christ himself and draw from it the necessary strength for our Christian witness.

Concerned about the effectiveness of our commitments we may have forgotten that the action of Christians in the world is above all the continuation of the work of Christ himself: to evangelize, to bring the good news of salvation to all peoples, to all peoples. It is the love of Christ that must fill our hearts and encourage us to evangelize. But this is only born of the faith that grows when one lives as an experience of a love that is received and communicated as an experience of grace and joy (2).

All of us who consider ourselves Catholic, we have to ask ourselves whether the faith we receive at baptism means anything to us, whether the creed we recite at Sunday Mass is part of our lives. The faith we receive as a gift comes to life when we come to believe with our hearts, when we open ourselves to its profound meaning of love: God loves us to the point of giving us his own Son so that we can be saved.

The original little Church that Christ founded, understood the need to fix forever the whole of truths to be believed and composed what we call the symbol of the apostles, so that it would pass from generation to generation in all its integrity and so it has come to Us. The Church, the depositary of this faith, invites us to commit to rediscovering its content, celebrating it, living it, praying it and reflecting on the very act with which it is believed. (3)

Our cultural, political or social commitments must be born of a living faith, capable

of offering a certain hope and a transformative love of the realities we live. Preparation for our action in the world is undoubtedly necessary, but the impetus for that action will be born of faith, as a response of love to God's love for us.

Christians demand a public presence in society, but such a presence is either evangelizing or will not go of purely human choice.

I think that, in this time of preparation for the Year of Faith, we can all begin the task of reviewing our own faith, if we believe what the Church believes, if we feel part of that Church, if we have understood that being Christians is to be an evangelizer in our environment at t of the coherence between what we believe and what we do.