

# NO LONGER FOR THEMSELVES

## *but for Him!*

2 Cor 5:15

## Jesus Youth Reflection

### February 2024

Lord, I do not know how to live,  
but for myself.  
I always seem to be thinking of myself,  
listening to my voice,  
and conversing with myself.  
My needs echo louder in my ears  
than those of any others.  
Often it is too subtle to tell.  
But I must admit,  
mostly everything I do is about me.  
Am I a prisoner of my self?

In the talents of others,  
I seem to seek my benefit.  
In my relationships with others,  
I craftily seek my advantage.  
When I help others,  
I desire to be noticed  
And am often disappointed when I'm not.  
I constantly seek validation from others,  
And often use my talents and abilities  
To display how gifted I am.  
I mostly live in a world of comparisons  
with thoughts of envy rumbling within.  
I feel terribly bad if I am not chosen,  
confided in or consulted.  
Am I not a prisoner of my self?

I think of my body with its cravings and desires  
And wonder whether it is all about my pleasures.  
Nothing that I watch, hear or taste ever seems to  
satisfy.  
I want more, some more and then a little bit more.  
I yearn for the newest gadgets;  
the old ones tire and bore me.  
I know I need to be chaste, but perhaps not today.  
Yes, I am often a prisoner of my self.

I appear to give my time to You.  
And run around ceaselessly—  
But am I doing it to please myself  
or those in authority?  
Often I say I am doing it for You,  
But don't I always seek my things,  
and mostly do it my way?

For I love staying in my comfort zone,  
And unlike Abel, I keep the best aside, for myself.  
The only one I truly love is myself,  
And yet even this love, when I least expect,  
Can turn into a deep loathing.  
Oh, what a prison, this wretched self!

Did you truly die to save me from my self?  
Sometimes I try to escape,  
prompted by the Eucharist and the Word.  
But a few days later, I am back in my prison,  
lured in by the tentacles of my self.  
Will I ever be free?

Even so Lord, You know that I love you.  
I want to believe that you can unlock this prison.  
Oh, speak to my weary heart.  
I want to reach out and seek help  
I long for the joy I see in others,  
But I fear that others will see my nakedness.  
Speak Lord, only you can comfort my aching heart.  
Deliver me from my self.

*Child, I truly love you.  
I carried your wretchedness on the Cross,  
And I died so that you would not die in your prison.  
Your old self was buried in baptism  
And behold, I have made all things new.  
I have died and Risen,  
So you too will rise with Me—  
Only believe, and obey.*

*Your new self is beautiful and marvellous  
Clothed in My resurrection,  
And shaped in My image and likeness.  
It longs to turn its heart towards Me,  
And away from the impulses of the old nature.  
I died and rose for you,  
so that you will live for me  
and nurture my nature in you.  
In this, you will find true joy.  
And in Me, you will find the true you.*

"...he died for all, that those who live might no longer  
live for themselves but  
for him who for their sake died and was raised."  
2 Cor 5:15

*(Inspired by the writings of Fr. Michel Quoist)*