

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE RELIGIOUS HOSPITALITY WITHIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: CASE STUDIES

Jean Guilherme Florentino Corrales

Academic of the Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG
chiefinspectorclouseau@gmail.com

Enilda Maria Fangueiro Pereira

Academic of the Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG
enildampereira@hotmail.com

Francieli Boaria

Master in Tourism and Hospitality
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG
franboaria@gmail.com

Received: June 28th, 2017

Aproved: September 4th, 2017

ABSTRACT

This article intends to explain how hospitality is conceptualized within the Catholic doctrine, as well as to understand how it is performed by the adherents of Catholicism through the contemplation of case studies. It is an exploratory research that is subsidized from bibliographic sources and access to web pages with an inductive method for the discussion of collected data. The analysis of the case studies allowed us to conclude that, in general, hospitality is practiced by Catholic members, although the sources on the subject are still scarce and the term "hospitality" as such is difficult to verify in the available literature.

Keywords: Hospitality. Religious hospitality. Catholicism. Solidarity. Salvation.

INTRODUCTION

The present work examines the conceptualization of hospitality in a religious context, more specifically in the Catholic religion, and the relations existing between this concept and the practice to be adopted by its followers on the subject. This discussion becomes palpating in that the welcome, the shelter and the commensality are echoed in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and even these conducts are imposed as a salvific occasion or condition.

Durkheim (p.32, 1996) defines religion as "a system of beliefs and practices concerning sacred, that is, separate, forbidden things, beliefs and practices that bring together a single moral community, called the church and all those who adhere to it." He emphasizes the importance of the subject for the human being, which justifies, by itself, this study. It is elucidated that religiosity is a faculty of persons who are interested in sacred things, in the externalization of creed through their own liturgy, doctrine and protocol.

Grinover (p.32, 2006) states that "hospitality supposes welcoming; it is one of the highest laws of humanity, it is a universal law. Welcoming is to allow, under certain conditions, the inclusion of the other in the space itself." The Holy Bible helps to discover the religious significance of hospitality, which is not only a humanitarian gesture but an aspect of the Christian command. The example of welcoming the guest and the stranger means to welcome Christ, who equals the excluded: "I was a stranger and you hosted me" (Matthew 25:35).

Commensality is intrinsically inserted into this scenario, in which welcome, coexistence, respect, and tolerance culminate with the coexistence at the table. Hospitality opens the door and welcomes the guest. Coexistence allows the exchange of experiences, sitting together, and exchange. One is as fundamental as the other because they extend and complement each other (Boff, 2006).

Religions are within this context, which carry out different events to attract the faithful and pilgrims who yearn for a spiritual moment, and are realized through masses, services, weekly or sporadic meetings of prayer, or meetings of prayers of one day or more when the members overnight pilgrimage to shrines, etc.

This work, besides the introduction, follows with the methodology used. Subsequently, it presents a brief discussion on the subject, addressing aspects of sacred writing, relating it to some authors in the area of hospitality. The section on the particular cases demonstrates some actions of the present time, which may contribute to the scientific analysis and discussion on the subject. Finally, it concludes with some suggestions for future works.

METHODOLOGY

45

During the research, some bibliographical sources and access to web pages were used, with the Roman Catholic Church as the research population, as well as an exploratory research and an inductive method for the discussion of the data collected. Although the Bible does not constitute a scientific publication, it is referenced throughout the text by taking into account the Christian doctrine that is based on it, including hospitality as a concept to be practiced by those who believe in Christ. In addition, the Bible is a well-studied book, considering its influence on the lives of individuals.

In order to enable the presentation of the studies related to the theme, the key words used were: religious hospitality; hospitality and commensality; hospitality of the Benedictines; hospitality on the way to Santiago.

The decision to include non-scientific documents was due to the lack of specific studies on religious hospitality. Data were collected from March to August 2017.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The starting point of this research is to verify the role of hospitality in the light of the Christian doctrine. In the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 25, verses 31 through 46, Jesus describes to his disciples how the final judgment will be, having all human beings before him and separated according to their works into two great groups, one on each side:

(...) Then the king will say to those on his right, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you picked me up. I was naked and you dressed me, sick and you visited me, imprisoned and you came to see me. (...)" In truth I say to you, every time you did it to one of my least brothers, you did it to me. " Then he will say to those on his left: "Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food. I was thirsty and you did not give me a drink. I was a stranger and you did not pick me up. I was naked and you did not clothe me, sick and imprisoned, and you did not visit me. (...)" Truly, I say to you, every time you have failed to do it to one of these little ones, you have stopped me from doing it. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, while the righteous shall go to eternal life.

46

One can see, from the outset, hospitality with an eminently salvific function, "... every man is now in the presence of the Son of Man, and is questioned by him" (Mien, 2000, p. 232) "(...) It is in the other, therefore, that we find the maximum density of the presence of God. (...) Everything passes through the other, beyond it there is no salvation. Hell is not the other, as Jean-Paul Sartre said, but the way to heaven "(Boff, 2005, p. 149).

Rodrigues (2015) elucidates the maxim of this biblical passage by saying that

(...) the criterion for salvation is not doctrines and dogmas, nor liturgies and rites, but the boundless love that recognizes in the diminished the "greatness" of God and does not let them lack the necessary: food, drink, security, shelter, relief, care, protection, company, etc. Without it, religion lacks "flesh" and "relevance" to human beings of every time (p. 73).

Lubich (2000), an important Christian thinker, signals this "being the Love" in a concrete way from the following perspective:

Love inserts us into God, and God is Love. But Love, which is God, is light and with the light we see if the way we approach and serve the brother is in conformity with the Heart of God and as the brother would like, as he would dream if Jesus were by his side, not us (p. 42-43).

Araujo (1994) explains that this love is not feeling or emotion, "... but concrete and real, that alleviates and shares the pains and sufferings of life" (p. 56). He also points out that the "little ones" mentioned by Jesus are all those who most need and with whom Christ himself identifies with "(...) and shows us that Love for Him is expressed through the sharing of the sufferings of those same people, from the relief of their pain. "(p.56).

47

Upon concerning the scientific studies on hospitality and welcoming in biblical texts, Mauss (1974) believes in hospitality as a gift, trusting that human contact is not a business contract, but a social relation. Camargo (2004) compares hospitality to a grouping of laws that commands social ritual and are not written anywhere, that its observance ranges from antiquity to modernity. In addition to a virtue, hospitality is considered an open and unlimited disposition of the soul, as an unconditional love, Boff (2005) corroborates.

Hospitality can be reflected in the action of welcoming and it is seen as a spontaneous one, alluding to charity, which is dependent on the will of the other, that is

A voluntary act introducing a newcomer or stranger into a community or territory, which makes him or her a member of this community or a legitimate inhabitant of that territory and who, in this capacity, authorizes him to benefit from all or part of the prerogatives that relate to their new status, definitive or provisional (Gouirand, 1996, p. 180).

According to Gouirand (1996), man needs the other for his survival, thus giving the reception process, concluding that this is a natural and social process. Camargo (2004) and Boff (2005) corroborate when they affirm that reception is a social fact. As it is found in the Scriptures of Peter's First Epistle, chapter 2, verse 11, and Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians chapter 5, verse 8, we are all guests in this world, pilgrims and strangers. In the pilgrim and in the needy, his presence in all human beings is recognized or unknown. Through the guest, Jesus himself is welcomed or rejected (Bible, Matthew 25, 35-45). In this sense, Camargo (2008) explains that hospitality is a social fact that takes the form of meeting someone who receives (host) and someone who is received (guest). Studies mention that between 1500 and 1800, the city of Venice served as a pilgrimage point, where there were hotels that catered to Italians, French, Flemings and Germans, demonstrating that in history there was already a concern with hospitality as explained by Caselli (1999) apud Cristoffoli (2007).

As regards to academic hospitality, the French school harmonizes with religious hospitality, since it relies on giving-receiving-returning, opposing itself to the American hospitality, which aims at commerce by relying on contracts and exchanges. Camargo (2004) explains that in the second, the sacrifice is non-existent, with only the exchange, because at the end of the contract, contact with the client is terminated (not the guest, who is paying for the service).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Saint Teresa of Avila, founder of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, considered to be a Doctor of the Catholic Church, warned her nuns about the need to have those not only in the contemplative life, but "to feed this divine guest" (Avila, 2002, p. 348), in the case of Jesus. Action and contemplation - represented respectively by Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus, a great friend of Jesus - according to her, should be

present simultaneously, so that God was not received badly or had his food neglected, because "how would Mary give Him the meal, always seated at His feet, if her sister did not help her?" (Avila, 2002, p. 585). Upon repeating the idea, he further stated:

Remember that it is necessary to have someone to cook the food of the Lord, and consider yourselves happy to serve Him as Martha. See that true humility lies in our willingness to be content with what the Lord wants of us and to regard us as ever unworthy of being taken by His handmaids. If we contemplate, have mental prayer, have vocal prayer, heal the sick, serve in the household and work - even in the most humble tasks - it is to serve the Guest who comes to us, staying with us, eating with us and we care to serve Him more in one way than in another? (Avila, 2002, p. 349).

In this sense, one observes hospitality as service to the other, discussing the idea of human hospitality mentioned by Mauss (1974) which is approached as the basic ritual of human relations. Camargo (2004) brings this discussion into the "unwritten laws of a ritual", translating the previous quotation (Avila, 2002) into hospitality as a gift; in gift as sacrifice and implicit interest; in the gift of being received; in the act of accepting a situation of inferiority before the donor; and, finally, in the duty of retribution when receiving hospitality.

Hospitality was cultivated mainly on traditional Catholic pilgrimages, where it is possible to identify it in its most primitive scope - which goes back to the constant displacements carried out by the apostles of Christ for the proclamation of the Gospel - as the Way of Saint James. Agrela (2013) reports the following personal testimony experienced in the stretch between the Spanish cities of Leon and Hospital de Orbigo:

Feeling hungry is commonplace on the Santiago Way. Although the food is enhanced with the traditional Pilgrim Menu, the effort to walk always opens the appetite. In 2007, when passing through San Miguel del Camino, a region near Villadangos del Paramo, a surprise: in the middle of the way there was a table. Yes, a table full of fruit and biscuits for the pilgrims, left by a resident of the village called Agapito. The second time I made

the script, I went in search of Agapito, who was still strong and helping the pilgrims spontaneously. During the conversation, I asked him: "Agapito, what makes him offer food to the pilgrims every day, for more than ten years, without charging anything for it?" He answered me with emotion: "The heart!" (Agrela , 2013, p. 126).

This report shows that hospitality is not based on a contract of exchange, as the American school teaches, but on hospitality as the giving-receiving-returning cycle, focusing on public and domestic hospitality, as the French school explains (Mauss, 1974 & Camargo, 2004). In his work "The Essay on the Gift", Marcel Mauss notes that this triad studied in ancient societies show that the exchanges had no commercial purpose, which explains the gift system where the exchange is unbalanced. Thus Agapito, as the fundamental premise of hospitality suggests, imposes no conditions, and his retribution is to be happy when he can be hospitable to the other.

50

This assumption is also present in works of fiction on the Santiago Way, such as the film *The Way*, in which the protagonist Tom Avery sees himself in a completely different reality from his own and he has a hospitable experience in addition to commercial relations.

Recently, in view of a growing increase in the number of pilgrims and given the dimensions of this pilgrimage, the Portuguese municipality of Albergaria-A-Velha (2017) organized a meeting especially dedicated to hospitality on the Santiago Way, with the aim to address the issue from a tourist point of view, aiming mainly at improving the conditions of hostels for pilgrims that walk the so-called Portuguese Route, one of more than ten possible ways to cross over to the Galician city of Santiago de Compostela. On most of the way, the hostels charge a fee, however, at reasonable prices, aiming to cover minimum maintenance costs. Some of them, even, leave open the contribution to be given by the pilgrim (Agrela, 2013). We conclude

that the Maussian matrix, in this case, is considered more relevant even if the exchange is explicit since the profit of the commercial version is not objective.

In the documents issued by the Vatican, the word "hospitality" is not usually referred to as such, often being encompassed by macro terms such as "solidarity" or "works of mercy." The Social Doctrine of the Church, while recognizing "the failings of many of its members" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2005, p. 110), emphasizes the institutional disposition to help those who need it most. "... More than fulfilling a merciful work, we are paying back a debt of justice. The Council Fathers strongly recommend that this duty be fulfilled so that what is already due to justice is not given to charity." (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2005, p. 110-111). In this way, it is possible to glimpse the hospitality inserted in this context from a more holistic view, considering that the works of mercy constitute a divisible but uniform set (Grün, 2009).

Castelli (2010) mentions the example of the Benedictine monks who, from the foundation of the Order of St. Benedict in the Middle Ages, began to dedicate themselves to hospitality. Initially designed for pilgrims in exchange for spontaneous contributions, it also welcomed merchants and travelers for recreational purposes. Chapter 53 of the Rule of Saint Benedict establishes the principal directives guiding this monastic hospitality, deserving special attention and total attention to the guest without the environment of the abbey being substantially altered. The detachment of specific persons for the service of the guests, as well as separate rooms in order to allow greater freedom to the sheltered ones and the privacy of the monks is necessary (Castelli, 2010, p. 53).

In addition, the rituals of commensality found in other chapters of the Rule "(...)" were forerunners of table manners in European society, and in that sense, the

monks were more refined than the laity, including the nobles." (Franco apud Castelli, 2010, p.54).

Even today, this living spirit is detected in monastic houses under the responsibility of the Order or congregations derived from it. Downtown Rio de Janeiro-RJ (2017), the Order has its main monastery in Brazil and has the House of Emmaus, a space for lodging consisting of 28 apartments, dining room, air-conditioned auditorium and sound equipment, meeting room, chapel and gardens. On its website, it also outlines some guidelines of its internal regulations, such as the inconvenience of wearing more revealing clothes - such as shorts - and the importance of attending schedules punctually.

In the Monastery of the Transfiguration (2017), located in Mogi das Cruzes-SP and belonging to the Camaldolense Benedictines, it is offered accommodation with food usually for a period of one week per person. The guest is asked for a contribution to be adjusted with his brother host - a monk assigned to the task of receiving visitors. They promote courses of spiritual formation and meetings of spirituality for the most varied target audiences.

The Monastery of Salvador (2017), composed of women and located in Bahia, also offers the possibility of receiving visitors interested in experiencing the monastic life. Its guesthouse, called the Gethsemane House, has 20 double suites, two conference rooms, a cafeteria and a private chapel. The monastery church is also accessible and, similarly, there is the assistance of nuns to the needs of individual or group retreats.

The Abbey of Resurrection (2017), located in Ponta Grossa-PR, emphasizes that it has a limited capacity to receive guests and that, because of this, it is necessary to book accommodation in advance. In addition, they highlight some of the main rules of their internal regulations, such as the non-admission of children due to lack of adequate structure, the absence of WiFi signal and the reminder that the monastery's inn is an extension of the same, this would be considered a "hostel" or "hotel".

Other monasteries, such as Brasília-DF (2017) and Campos do Jordão-SP (2017), do not detail the conditions of lodging and are limited to offering the spaces through a display of photos and a text where there is the possibility of making retreats using the existing structure.

In all these enclosures we can observe the old hospitality, the belief in hospitality as a virtue. Although they establish some conditions/rules - often to avoid embarrassment due to the very characteristic of contemporaneity, such hospitality is based on the relation of happiness to being hospitable to the other, as pointed out by Mauss (1974), opposing the relationship of payment or profit, as in the case of the means of lodging.

CONCLUSION

By taking into account that the Bible is one of the best-selling books in the world and that it is the matrix for the most varied Christian religions, in spite of not being a scientific work, incipient studies on the theme of "religious hospitality" have been found for this research, since the term "hospitality" as such is difficult to verify in the more specific literature of the Church, as well as in official documents. Therefore, it becomes extremely relevant to further discuss this theme in the academy, in order to allow the subject to have a larger framework than the current one.

Since ancient times, the socialization of man with one another is a bare necessity, both in a welcoming, returning or giving way. Eating and drinking together pleasurably at the same table is the most concrete action of this need, as it is shown by biblical facts narrated under this theme.

The bibliographical survey shows that despite the new times, religious institutions still manage to offer hospitality without taking into account a relation of exchange. Welcoming, hosting, feeding and entertaining are the basic and indispensable elements for hospitality to take place. These are identified in the text where hospitality is treated as a gift.

This study aimed to assist in understanding the aspects of hospitality in the Catholic doctrine and it confirms that, in general, hospitality is practiced by Catholics.

The researchers, by seeking to approach the practical reality of this study, intend to continue investigating this theme by broadening the research in the current context, with an application of instruments at religious events.

REFERENCES

- Abadia da Ressurreição. (2017). Hospedaria. Retrieved from <http://abadiadaressurreicao.org/hospedaria>
- Agrela, D. (2013). Guia do Viajante do Caminho de Santiago. São Paulo: Évora.
- Araujo, V. (1994). Jesus e o Uso dos Bens. Trad. João Batista Florentino. São Paulo: Cidade Nova.
- Avila, S. T. de. (2002). Obras Completas. 2.ed. Trad. Adail Ubirajara Sobral et al. São Paulo: Loyola.
- Bíblia. (1994). Bíblia de Jerusalém. 3.ed. São Paulo: Paulus.
- Boff, L. (2005). Virtudes para um outro mundo possível. Vol. I. Hospitalidade: direito e deveres de todos. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Boff, L. (2006). Virtudes para um outro mundo possível. Vol. II. Convivência, respeito e tolerância. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Camargo, L. O. L. (2004). Hospitalidade. São Paulo: Aleph.
- Camargo, L. O. L. (2008). A pesquisa em hospitalidade. *Revista Hospitalidade*. São Paulo, ano V, n. 2, pp. 15-51, jul.- dez.
- Castelli, G. (2010). Hospitalidade: A Inovação na Gestão das Organizações Prestadoras de Serviço. São Paulo: Saraiva.
- Conselho Municipal de Albergaria-a-Velha. (2017). Programa do Encontro Albergaria 2017 – Hospitalidade no Caminho de Santiago. Retrieved from http://www.cm-albergaria.pt/output_efile.aspx?id_file=33470&id_object=23315
- Christoffoli, A. (2007). *Turismo e Religiosidade no Brasil: um estudo dos discursos da produção acadêmica brasileira*. 145 f. Tese (Doutorado em Turismo e Hotelaria). Universidade do Vale do Itajaí, Balneário Camboriú.

- Durkheim, É. (1996). *As formas elementares da vida religiosa: o sistema totêmico na Austrália*. Traduzido por: Paulo Neves. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, (Coleção Tópicos).
- Gouirand, P. (1996). Le Concept d' Accueil- Reconnaissance, Hospitalité et Maternage. *Les Cahiers Espaces*, France, n. 48, pp. 134-141.
- Grinover, L. (2006). A hospitalidade urbana: acessibilidade, legibilidade e identidade. *Revista Hospitalidade*, São Paulo, ano III, n. 2, pp. 29-50, 2. sem.
- Grün, A. (2009). *Para que o Mundo se Transforme: As Sete Obras de Misericórdia*. Trad. Ingeborg Scheible. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Lubich, C. (2000). *Meditações*. 11.ed. Trad. Equipe Editorial Cidade Nova. São Paulo: Cidade Nova.
- Mauss, M. (1974). *Ensaio sobre a dádiva*. Forma e razão da troca nas sociedades arcaicas. In: *Sociologia e Antropologia*. v. II. São Paulo: Edusp.
- Mien, A. (2000). *Jesus, Mestre de Nazaré*. 11. ed. Trad. Irami Bezerra da Silva. São Paulo: Cidade Nova.
- Mosteiro da Transfiguração. (2017). Hospitalidade e Suas Formas. Retrieved from <http://camaldolenses.com.br/hospitalidade.php?id=61>
- Mosteiro de São Bento de Brasília. (2017). Hospedaria. Retrieved from <https://www.msbento.org.br/aboutus>
- Mosteiro de São Bento do Rio de Janeiro. (2017). Hospitalidade. Retrieved from <http://www.osb.org.br/emaus.html>
- Mosteiro do Salvador. (2017). Hospedaria. Retrieved from <http://mosteirososalvador.org.br/msba/index.php/trabalhos/hospedaria>
- Mosteiro São João. (2017). Casa de Retiro Santa Scholastica. Retrieved from <http://www.mosteirosaojoao.org.br/casa-de-retiro>
- Pontifício Conselho Justiça e Paz. (2005). *Compêndio da Doutrina Social da Igreja*. São Paulo: Paulinas.
- Rodrigues, J. F. (2015). *Alarga o Espaço da tua Tenda: Uma Abordagem Teológica da Hospitalidade Inter-Religiosa*. 96 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Teologia Sistemática). Faculdade de Teologia, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre.
- The Way*. (2010). [DVD] Directed by E. Estevez. USA: David Alexanian and Emilio Estevez.