When the **Gloria in excelsis Deo** begins to resound in the Holy Mass, a moment of light and spiritual fullness opens: it is as if earth joins the choir of angels who sang in Bethlehem on the night our Savior was born. It is not a simple hymn; it is a solemn proclamation of faith, a song of worship, and a school of theology condensed into words.

At a time when faith is sometimes reduced to vague feelings or passing experiences, rediscovering the **Gloria** means rediscovering the greatness of the liturgy and, above all, the mystery of Christ, to whom its praises are addressed.

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1. **History of the Gloria: the angels' hymn that became the Church's prayer**

The **Gloria** has its roots in the Gospel according to St. Luke (Lk 2:14):

> *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."*

These words were spoken by the angels on Christmas night, announcing the birth of the Messiah to the shepherds. It was a new song, the hymn of the Incarnation, the song of joy of creation redeemed.

Over time, the Church adopted it as a liturgical hymn. In the early centuries, it was recited mainly in morning prayer, as a **song of praise to begin the day under the light of Christ**. It first spread in the East and later reached Rome.

In the Roman liturgy, Pope St. Damasus (4th century) introduced it in the Christmas Masses. Later, in the 11th century, it was established in the form we know today, as part of the **Ordinary of the Mass**, reserved for Sundays and solemnities, that is, for the days when the Church wants to highlight with joy the glory of God manifested in Christ.

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2. **Theological structure of the Gloria: a Trinitarian and Christological hymn**

The Gloria is, in itself, a **summary of the Catholic faith**. Its structure reflects a crescendo of worship:

1. **Initial praise**: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men whom the Lord loves.”
    - Here resounds the voice of the angels, reminding us that our liturgy is not a human invention, but participation in the heavenly hymn.
2. **Enumeration of praises**: “We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks…”
    - Five verbs expressing the totality of the Christian attitude before God. At this moment the liturgy does not ask for anything, it simply bows down in worship.
3. **Christology**: “Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father…”
    - This is the heart of the hymn: Christ is proclaimed as true God, Redeemer, and Mediator.
4. **Confident supplication**: “You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us…”
    - Here the paschal dimension appears: the Lamb slain who intercedes for us.
5. **Confession of Trinitarian faith**: “For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.”
    - The hymn culminates in the Trinitarian vision, showing us that the liturgy is entering into the eternal love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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3. **The Gloria and our spiritual life: what it teaches us for today**

The Gloria is not a “musical filler” in the Mass. It is a **spiritual exercise**. Each time we recite or sing it, we learn to live in a more Christian way:

- **It teaches us to put God first.** In a culture obsessed with the self, the Gloria is an antidote: we ask for nothing, we simply praise.
- **It reminds us that true peace comes from God.** Not from human agreements, nor

from ideologies, but from reconciliation with Christ.
- **It invites us to live in gratitude.** The Gloria is a hymn of thanksgiving: a Christian cannot live in constant complaint, but in gratitude.
- **It makes us humble.** We recognize that we need the mercy of Christ who takes away the sin of the world.

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4. **Practical guide: how to live the Gloria in daily life**

From a **theological and pastoral** point of view, the Gloria can become a true school of prayer. Here are some concrete practices:

1. **Recite it in your personal prayer.** It is not exclusive to Mass; you can pray it every morning as praise at the start of the day.
2. **Meditate on it part by part.** Spend time reflecting on each verb: how do I praise God? How do I bless Him in my daily life?
3. **Connect it with Christmas.** Each time you pray it, remember the angels of Bethlehem: the Incarnation is still present in your life.
4. **Use it as a spiritual examen.** Ask yourself: is my life a Gloria to God? Or is it rather a constant complaint?
5. **Live it communally.** When you sing it in Mass with others, remember that it is not your isolated voice, but the entire Church joining the heavenly choirs.

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5. **The Gloria and today's world: a prophetic word**

In a world marked by war, division, and the idolatry of power and money, the Gloria proclaims something revolutionary:

- **Glory does not belong to man, but to God.** Against the cult of fame, power, or money, the Gloria puts God at the center.
- **Peace is not a political agreement, but a divine gift.** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you" (Jn 14:27).
- **Man's true dignity lies in being loved by God.** "To men whom the Lord loves": on this rests authentic social justice and the defense of life.

6. **Conclusion: let your life be a Gloria**

The Gloria of the Mass is much more than a Sunday hymn: it is a **school of Christian life**. It teaches us to put God at the center, to live gratefully, to ask forgiveness with humility, and to confess faith in Christ before the world.

If you want a key to live with joy, begin your day as the Mass begins: by saying **“Glory to God”**. Then your very life will become a hymn that unites earth with heaven.

> *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16).*