

EXERCISES of the FRATERNITY

OF COMMUNION AND LIBERATION



*What is man
and how does he come
to know it*

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Rimini 2000

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Al Reverendo Signore
Mons. LUIGI GIUSSANI

Ho appreso con gioia che la Fraternità "Comunione e Liberazione" si riunisce in Rimini in occasione degli annuali Esercizi Spirituali sul tema: *"Che cos'è l'uomo e come fa a saperlo"*, il cui testo è stato da Lei, con solerte premura, preparato.

Accompagno con la preghiera questi giorni di forte esperienza spirituale e chiedo al Signore di renderli fruttuosi per ogni partecipante e per l'intera Fraternità.

Il Giubileo ci invita a fissare lo sguardo su Cristo, Redentore dell'uomo. In realtà, è solo nel mistero del Verbo incarnato che trova pieno compimento il mistero dell'uomo. L'intero Anno Giubilare costituisce così un ripetuto pellegrinaggio verso il cuore di Cristo, perché il credente, convertito e rinnovato dallo Spirito del Risorto, s'impegna a fare di Cristo il cuore del mondo.

Vi sia di guida, in questi giorni di più intenso dialogo con il Signore, la Santa Madre di Dio, dal cui seno purissimo è scaturita la luce che illumina ogni uomo. Sia essa a sorreggervi nel rinnovato slancio di annunciare il suo Figlio, Salvatore del mondo.

Con questi sentimenti, avvalorati dalla preghiera, imparto di cuore a Lei ed a quanti converranno a tale appuntamento da diversi Continenti, la mia Benedizione, che estendo volentieri al venerato Fratello, il Cardinale James Francis Stafford, ed a quanti interverranno alla concelebrazione eucaristica, che egli presiederà a conclusione del vostro incontro.

Dal Vaticano, 17 Maggio 2000

Friday 19 May, evening

•INTRODUCTION

During the entrance and exit:

Franz Schubert, "Death and the maiden,"

Amadeus Quartet, "Spirto Gentil, " Deutsche Grammophon

Fr Pino (Stefano Alberto). The notes of the last movement of Schubert's "Death and the maiden" are like a horse-ride, "the ride of eternity:" they introduce us to this action of ours which is a great, important step in our journey towards Destiny.

I want first of all to bring you greetings from Fr Giussani who is not here at Rimini, but in Milan, and will live these Exercises with us in live contact during these days, taking part in all the moments and intervening when necessary.

I want also to tell you that for these Exercises he wants a chorality that may be a sign and an expression of the communion that we are living and of the responsibility that we are living as communion. So this evening the introduction will be lived and witnessed by Fr Luigi Negri, tomorrow's lessons will be given by me, and the concluding assembly on Sunday morning will be led by our Spanish friend Julian Carron.

I would like to greet all the friends who at this moment are linked up with us, 26,000 of us at Rimini, of whom several thousand are not yet enrolled in the Fraternity; the "Gruppo Adulto" *Memores Domini* are taking part in these Exercises for the first time. I want to greet along with you all the friends who are joined by direct satellite link in 16 countries (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Holland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland) and the friends who will follow these Exercises later in 32 countries.

As the first expression of our freedom, we want to ask the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, that it be an expression of expectation, and that this expectation become entreaty for a change, in other words entreaty for knowledge of and new affection for Christ. Let's stand and sing *Come Holy Spirit*.

Come Holy Spirit

Luigi Negri. When Fr Giussani asked me to introduce this great annual event of ours with a short testimony, I felt the only way to answer him would be to try to share with you, with all the simplicity of my heart, this year's journey, in other words what has happened between last year and this year for someone who has tried, with his all too evident limitations, to adhere to our common journey, to our common guidance in this company guided towards Destiny, which is all our strength, all our truth, all our pride before the world that does not understand it and so, as it did with the Lord Jesus Christ, tries to eliminate it.

What has been formed, what do I think has been formed this year in my heart and in the hearts of many friends?

1. Firstly, my friends, the great certainty expressed by John Paul II at the beginning of his Pontificate and which Fr Giussani takes up again every time he speaks, "Christ the redeemer of man, centre of the cosmos and of history,"¹ is, I don't say more familiar to us, but less strange.

The fundamental content of our self-awareness is not ourselves, nor our analyses of ourselves and of the situations, our plans, our forecasts, our programmes, our moods, our feelings or our resentments that destroy life and companionship. The fundamental content of our self-awareness is His presence, He, the only redeemer of man and the world. Let's ask that this be less strange to us; that at the dawn of the day the great certitude of the *Benedictus* may resound not only as the formal content of our prayer, but a throbbing of the heart and the intelligence: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited his people and redeemed them."² All the rest comes after this certitude; all the rest: all our laborious and conniving permanence in this terrible world, in this world so hostile to the truth, and therefore to God, in this world dissipated in its humanity, as Fr Giussani has taught us in unforgettable, and as far as I'm concerned, unsurpassable pages, in the preface of the book *In Search Of The Human Face?* But God is stronger than evil, Christ present conquers evil, he has conquered it in His resurrection and he conquers it daily, and so he stands before us, in the depth of our heart, like the rock, "I love you, Lord, my rock."⁴

The evil that is in us and outside us, this evil finds us all too often insensitive spectators, when not accessories, there is a shame we do

not feel for all the evil that lives among us, even in the experience of our people. But Christ is stronger, in Him God has given the definitive word about history and the world, he has freed us from nothingness and has filled our life with meaning and truth, he has given a new light to every man's existence, as the Pope said in his great *urbi and orbi* message on Easter Sunday.

2. The second passage I make for myself and as far as I can for you is as follows. So the basic problem is to take part in this event, to live it, not as the content of a discourse, nor as a proposal for a spiritual piety, but rather as an event that changes daily the intelligence and the heart: this is *memory*. Memory, in other words, as Fr Giussani has taught us, the acknowledgement of Christ present before us in the mysterious sign of His unity, in the sacrament, in the authority and the great mystery of the Catholic Church and more particularly, more familiarly, more persuasively, made flesh in our life in our company, guided by Fr Giussani's charism.

All our strength is in prayer as memory of Him present and as abandonment to our company, to our unity, as the place where his presence comes daily to meet us and reconstitutes us over and above every weakness and every limitation, because He forgives us.

It is the vertiginous experience of Christ's forgiveness that reconstitutes our heart, disposes us to new, daily commitment to the journey for ourselves and with the brothers nearest to us.

3. Then the great word "hope" blossoms suddenly and astoundingly. This is the third passage. This life is lived with an inexorable certitude, in the embrace of a victory that we are called to display in time, in daily life.

In his testimony in St Peter's Square at the Jubilee of the Priests, Fr Giussani said, "All our strength comes not from human resources, but from what the Catechism, with a very humble, popular, motherly, fatherly, brotherly word, calls 'Grace'. That which the Christian people in every age, but especially in moments of terror, goes to ask in the sanctuaries dedicated to Our Lady, *Mater Christi*, Mother of the new man. Grace is strength of victory, it does not eliminate the battle, but it is the ultimate source of peace. As the Bible says, 'Our strength is the grace of God'. And this qualifies our action in the world as a journey to a victory, to safety and peace in the certainty of victory: *spe erecti, in spem contra spem*.⁵ It is in setting our feet on this stone that

we are called and sent to travel the road in hope, for the good of the fellow-men that we will meet."⁶

Our life lives in hope, in certainty of God's victory, through our day-to-day life.

4. So - and here we come to the fourth passage - hope is the one great *realism*, because it imbues the contents of human experience with the certainty of God's victory.; and human experience is an experience of limitation and we cannot in any way have the presumption of cancelling from our awareness this limitation, about which Fr Giussani has enlightened us, especially during last year's Exercises.

The first limit is the loss of memory and the substitution of memory with an ideology, then connivance with the worldly mentality, connivance with a non- Christian way of thinking and living, of approaching the questions, of perceiving ourselves, of perceiving our brothers, of perceiving people.

The realism of hope makes us take part deeply, intensely in the events of our time, it makes us judge them clearly (culture) and it makes us love men over and above every difference and every distinction (charity). It is a realism that invests the talent given, knowing that it is a talent from God, but that the work that develops is also the work of our freedom, "this thing that is all mine in which God is dwelling."⁷ As Pierre de Craon said, as we heard in the days of our youth as the ideal of every Christian vocation: "This thing of mine in which God dwells;" this thing that is all mine, which carries within it the greatness of freedom, the capacity for love, the limitation, the shame of sin, the blindness; this thing that is all mine, made of greatness and poverty, that God's victory makes His own, so that my life becomes a sign.

5. And this is the final passage: the impetus of *mission*. In the hearts of many, of very many it is being affirmed that life is given in order to be spent for the human glory of Christ, living the day-to-day circumstances of life, in their greatness and in their smallness, in their openness full of ideal passion and in their inevitable pettiness. The circumstances of life: eating, drinking, living, dwelling, working, teaching, the life of the *polis* and the concern for justice among men.

Let us ask that the circumstances of life be lived not for themselves, but in order that Christ be proclaimed to everyone, to the furthest ends of the earth. Let us ask this capacity, therefore, of being in the world,

but with the detachment of those who belong to Christ, and so do not depend on the results, because, as we have learned from Fr Giussani's books on the Church, the outcome is in His hands and in the circumstances. but the merit of our life is wholly in our freedom that responds.

This mission, this sharing with our concrete daily lives in the mystery of the human glory of Christ, offering our contribution, that enlightens the daily journey and makes it intensely human and full of compassion towards ourselves and towards others: "Do not judge yourselves, because only God judges."⁸

Perhaps this is the fulfilment of the great promise that the Pope re-echoed on that unforgettable day at Norcia, re-evoking St. Benedict, our specific father in the history of the great Christian spiritualities, "It was necessary for the heroic to become usual and for the usual become heroic."⁹

Our life is heroic because it challenges, in the certainty of God. our evil and the evil of the world, and we carry this treasure joyfully in our earthen vessels, but it is a treasure that has been given us and we cannot fail to proclaim it clearly every day before the Lord, before our conscience and before all men.

The Bible says. "All this was made by the Lord, *a Domino factum est istu, et est mirabile in oculis nostris*, a marvel in our eyes."¹⁰

May the discipline of the intelligence and the heart of these days, may the mutual obedience, and the affection for the great magisterium that guides us spread this wonder and consolidate it and make it become a clear awareness, for a greater gratitude, a greater responsibility that we will be able to take up with more energy, so that Christ and God be everything in everyone.

Fr Pino. "All this was made by the Lord." Sharing in what is happening in our life, we ask ourselves consciously, aware of the value and the nature of this action, all the awareness, all the freedom in adhering for how these hours, these days, will turn out.

The first expression that this is a true Fraternity, a people on the march, is that the sacrifice of those who have stayed at home, of those who are ill. of those who are being tried in many different ways may be. now, one thing with our being here, with our consciousness and our freedom in taking part in the actions, in the prayer together, in the

songs, in the attention to what is said, in the precision in following the directions, which at times may seem rather heavy, but necessary in order that the movement of this people be an order, which is always something beautiful, the measure of a truth in action.

Let me recommend silence particularly. It is not a generic reminder: I am asking you for silence during the time of the bus journeys, which for some may be rather long, and while entering and leaving the auditorium. As the holiday season is beginning there are a thousand reasons for distraction, a thousand occasions for the silence to be broken, but there is one great reason for taking it up again a moment later. Silence is not something formal: silence is the awareness of a Presence, the awareness of a You who speaks to my life, who judges it and embraces it.

So let's not worry if the temptation comes to speak while entering or leaving the room. Let's just pick ourselves up again, at once, precisely because this is the action of each one of us, of the heart (reason and affection) of each one of us with Christ.

Before the Mass which will be celebrated by His Excellency Mgr Danzi, who will be with us, along with His Excellency Mgr Frigeni, throughout these three days, I would like to read you the hand-written letter that His Holiness John Paul II sent to Fr Giussani on 17th May.

I heard with joy that the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation is gathering at Rimini for the annual Spiritual Exercises on the theme "What is man and how can he come to know it," the text of which you have prepared with your usual care.

I accompany these days of strong spiritual experience with prayer and I ask the Lord to make them fruitful for all the participants and for the whole Fraternity.

The Jubilee invites us to fix our eyes on Christ, the redeemer of man. It is really only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man finds its complete fulfilment. Thus the whole Jubilee Year constitutes a repeated pilgrimage towards the heart of Christ, so that the believer, converted and renewed by the Spirit of the Risen One, may commit himself to making Christ the heart of the world.

May the Holy Mother of God from whose most pure womb sprang the light who enlightens every man be your guide in these days of more intense dialogue with the Lord. May she support you in your renewed energy in proclaiming her Son, Saviour of the world.

With these sentiments, sustained by prayer, I cordially impart to you and to all who will gather for this appointment from the various

Continents, my blessing which I willingly extend to our venerable brother, Cardinal James Francis Stafford, and to those who will take part in the Eucharistic Celebration at which he will preside at the conclusion of your meeting.

John Paul II

Vatican City, 17th May 2000

HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MGR GIANNI DANZI
SECRETARY OF THE GOVERNORATE OF VATICAN CITY

"Let not your hearts be troubled" (*Jn* 14:1-17).

The invitation of today's Gospel is to serenity which is the preface to peace, for each of us. We have no need to worry about finding a place for our person or a place suited to our plan.

"I am going to prepare a place for you" (*Jn* 14:2). There is a certainty before us: the place has already been prepared for us. It is enough and needful for every one of us to accept that place, the place that He has prepared for us. In this place and in no other will be the complete realisation of our person and of our life: it is our vocation.

"I will take you with me" (*Jn* 14:3). It is a company that the Lord has affirmed, and constantly affirms for my person and for yours.

"I will take you with me." You and I are asked only a docility to let ourselves be taken and a freedom to adhere to this possession that the Lord has of us, for a company that is visible and present in history.

"So you may be where I am" (*Jn* 14:3). This is God's work, this is our work in history: to make memory of God's work. I believe that this is what each one of us has learned and learns day by day in the attentive and docile sequela of the charism that the Spirit has given so abundantly to His Church through the person and the life of Fr Giussani, and which it has already expressed, with signs of novelty for the Church spread throughout the world, how true it is that Christ is the redeemer of man and of history. But this is what the Holy Father's untiring incidence in the life of man and history witnesses to us, too. *Sub tuum praesidium*, mother, we entrust our desire.

Saturday 20 May, morning

• FIRST MEDITATION

What is man...

During the entrance and exit:

Ludwig Van Beethoven, Triple concerto in C' major, op. 56,

H. Von Karajan, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, EMI

Angelus

Morning Prayer

Fr Pino. I want to begin by reading two telegrams that have arrived. The first is from the bishop of Cordoba, His Excellency Mgr Javier Martinez:

"Dear friends, on the occasion of the Exercises I join you in the gift of communion that has been given us and in the gratitude for the great paternity of Fr Giuss. He and the reality born of him are the instrument for which we are helped to understand the T through the human method with which God involves himself in our life, in the flesh of his Son Jesus Christ, and the encounter with this reality is the place where light is thrown on the questions of our heart. I ask the Lord that the Exercises be for each one the occasion for renewing the living awareness of this grace, for our joy and for the good of the whole Church and of the world. With lots of affection, Javier Martinez, bishop of Cordoba."

The second is from His Eminence Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna:

"Since I cannot be present at your Exercises, I want to send you my most heartfelt greetings. The theme of your Exercises this year is 'What is man and how can he come to know it.' Along with the question about God, it is man's oldest question. Sophocles affirms, 'There are many mysterious things, but the most mysterious is man'. The

expression that he uses (*polla ta deina*, in Greek) can also mean 'There are many things that instil fear, but the most fearsome of all is man.' So great in his freedom and at the same time so terribly open to the risk of that very freedom. I wish that in these Exercises you may live the deep experience of the encounter with Him of whom the Gospel affirms: 'He knows what is in man,' he alone is the *Redemptor hominis*, the Redeemer of man. May the Exercises also give you the strength to witness it. This I invoke for you with my most cordial blessing. Christoph Cardinal Schonborn."

1. The self-awareness of creation

"There are many mysterious things, but the most mysterious is man" (Sophocles), the most mysterious in his freedom of acknowledging That of which he is made, That of which he is constituted.

What is man, and how can he come to know it: the theme, the line of development of this theme drawn out by Fr Giussani, represents in our life the possibility of a step forward, of a deepening of the journey of these years. "God all in all," "Christ everything in everyone,"¹¹ three years ago. "The miracle of change as a new knowledge,"¹² two years ago and, last year "Belonging"¹³ as strength, as the condition and strength for change.

We are here to become aware of our humanity, in whatever state we are in this moment, whatever may be the feelings that prevail in us, in the happy or painful experiences, in the circumstances in which the Lord places us in this period of the life of the world.

The song we have heard says, "The things I see make me laugh like a child, the things I see make me weep like a man."¹⁴ We have to realise that we can ask ourselves, feel ourselves asked this question once again - "What is man?" only if we start off from the experience we are living, only if we start off from what touches our flesh, from what we feel stirring inside our existence, from what we feel we must change, from what we hope and from what we expect to happen.

"What is man that you should keep him in mind; mortal man that you care for him?"¹⁵ In this Psalm, psalm 8, that summarises the whole content, the whole drama of our life, of man's life before reality, before the cosmos; in this psalm lies the definition of man as destiny, as the meaning of his life: the meaning of life is the relationship with Him who in this instant is making me.

"On the lips of children and of babes you have found praise to foil your enemy."¹⁶ But why does God give value to the smallest action, to the instant that passes, to when man tries to express himself? Because man is relationship with God, he is that point of reality, that point of the cosmos in which reality, the cosmos, becomes aware of itself, self-awareness. This is the first point: what is man? Man is the point in which the whole of reality - the sky, the sea, the stars - becomes awareness, question, need for a meaning.

In Fr Giussani's lesson last year on work, we find this observation: "What is man that you should keep him in mind, that you should remember him? Among all the beasts and the insects of the cosmos man is like a hundredth, a thousandth, a ten thousandth of the beasts that there are in every environment. But the greatness of man - his honour and glory - depends on the fact that man, the individual man, is relationship with the infinite; it is in order to live this that man is the end of this process: the penetration of the eternal is this process - man must take in his hands all that God has made."¹⁷ It is for this that everything is put into our hands, it is for this that we can and must take hold of what is put into our hands.

Greatness and disproportion. This is what Giacomo Leopardi observes in a page of his *Notebook*. "Nothing shows more the greatness and the power of human intellect, neither the height and the nobility of man, than the power he has of knowing and completely understanding and feeling strongly his smallness: when, considering the plurality of the worlds, he feels himself an infinitesimal part of a globe, that is the smallest part of one of the infinite systems that make up the world, and in this consideration he wonders at his own smallness, and feeling it deeply and observing it intensely, he confuses himself with nothingness and almost loses himself in the thought of the immensity of things and finds himself as it were lost in the incomprehensible vastness of existence. Then, with this act and with this thought, he gives the greatest proof possible of his nobility, of the power and immense capacity of his mind, which, enclosed in such a small and tiny being, has been able to come to know and understand things so far above his nature, and can embrace and contain with his thought this immensity of existence and of things."¹⁸

What smallness! I was not, and I am. I was not and I am, as awareness, as the ability to embrace this immensity of existence and of things: awareness of the cosmos, awareness of being, of the being of things. What greatness!

What is man? What am I? This is the question that once again yesterday evening, with some friends I heard Davide Rondoni quoting Leopardi's *Night song* to Fr Fabio. While looking at the moon in the sky, in the loneliness of the Asian steppe, he reflects, "Often when I see you/ so silent over the desert plain/ that borders the sky in its distant circle,/ where I wander with my flock/ following me as I journey on and on./ And when I see the stars shining in the sky/ I say to myself 'What use is it all?/ What is it for, this infinite air/ and that deep infinite silence?/ What does this immense loneliness mean?/ And what am I?'"¹⁹

Awareness of reality ("What is it for, this infinite air?/ and that deep infinite silence") is echoed only in one point, in only one reality in the whole cosmos: inside me. "And what am I/" It is this question, this cry for meaning that characterises the event of the T, the event of that point which seems nothing, that is nothing, but - remember Matisse and his *Icarus*! - with that pulsating red point that is called the "heart:" the heart, as the endless desire for happiness, for fulfilment, for satisfaction, for perfection. The happening, the realisation of this dynamics, the moving of this desire is a request, a plea for meaning, a plea for happiness.

2. The renunciation of desire for truth is a renunciation of the desire for happiness

Is there a meaning? Is there or is there not? Because to ask, "And what am I?" coincides with the present urgency of this meaning. And the alternative that opens up before this question, within this question - "and what am I?" -, is precisely this: if the question remains a question, if the desire moves like a question, if it discovers implicit in this question the possibility of an infinite answer, or if impatience, self-love, the urging of reason become in us and in the world, the presumption of providing an answer ourselves.

For this is the great possibility that man is given: everything is placed in his hands. What is man? "You have put everything in his hands."²⁰ And this becomes, for man, the occasion for asserting himself, ignoring the origin of things, ignoring being: instead of a question, an opening up of the desire beyond oneself, it becomes the assertion of one's own capacity, the presumption of science, the presumption of technique, the presumption of reason of being itself the measure of reality, of being itself what indicates the being of things.

Hannah Arendt observes in this regard, "The conviction of being able to know only what we ourselves have made has led to the absolute lack of meaning, inevitably linked to the intuition of being able to decide to do anything at all."²¹ And Daniel-Rops observes, if we renounce the fact that everything has a meaning, then "there is nothing, nothing beyond this abjection that surrounds us and of which we are accomplices: we are born, we die, and between these two facts, which have no importance except for ourselves, what is there? Nothing, a bit of agitation. Flight before the great black wind. We live side by side with men and we can do nothing to prevent their suffering. We feel empty."²²

Because reason's presumption, as science, technique and power to be the one to measure and determine the breadth of reality and the breadth of the question is quashed today by this great humiliation, this great awareness of reason's impotence before reality.

This is what Norberto Bobbio observed in an article one week ago. "When I feel that I have reached the end of my life without having found an answer to the ultimate questions, my intelligence is humiliated, and I accept this humiliation, I accept it and I don't try to escape this humiliation through faith, through paths I cannot travel. I remain a man of limited and humiliated reason: I know that I don't know. This I call my religiosity."²³

This is the characteristic of the dominant religiosity: not just this genericity (we shall return to this), but this humiliation, this temptation of feeling defeated, of not being able to establish any link, of not being able to harbour any question, of considering foreign this need for meaning that I am, this need for truth that I am.

*Quid fortius desiderat homo quam veritatem?*²⁴ What does man desire more strongly than truth, than the unveiling of the meaning of reality, of that to which I am attached, of what I love? It is as if this desire today were like a still-born child, were aborted at the instant in which it is born in the heart, at the age of twenty, forty and ninety, because this desire is man's very structure, his stature. The climate of power, the prevailing intellectual climate is this: the renunciation of desire, of the need for truth, of the need for happiness. Fr Giussani stresses it in the first part of *The "I," power and works*.²⁵ Pasolini reminds us of it in his *Lutheran letters*, "First they teach you renunciation, absolute, habitual, daily renunciation: the lack of vitality that in them is a given fact, real and physical. They must reduce the effort of living to the minimum. In social terms this means exactly renunciation, which is then concern for acceptance at any cost. The second

thing they teach you is a certain obligatory tendency to unhappiness."²⁶ Because unhappiness is born from saying, "it's not possible." An obligatory tendency to unhappiness. then. And the third thing is "The rhetoric of ugliness," of the banal.

Cesare Pavese translates this "obligatory tendency to unhappiness," this theorisation of renunciation, this mendacious exaltation of limitation in different terms. In his *Diary*, we find, "You should no longer take seriously the things that don't depend on you alone. Like love, friendship and glory. And as for those that depend only on you, does it matter much whether you take them seriously or not? Who will know anything of it? Because, if you are alone, there is no *who*, even the 'I' vanishes."²⁷

Renunciation of the need for truth, renunciation of the need for happiness. Happiness is transformed into a generic piety, in a thrust towards "welfare." towards doing good to others. Thus "giving aid" in this perspective, in this theorised renunciation, in this stifled instance of our happiness, becomes violence towards the other, falsehood and violence. As Finkelkraut observes, "With pity love is excluded, since the law of love is reciprocity and there is no reciprocity possible in pity. Pity is a decayed, degraded love, a feeble trickle of divine water that is lost in the sands. What appears today behind the unification of all human relationships in the one feeling of 'humanity' is not so much concern for others as an invincible diffidence as regards their freedom." Not a true openness to the other, but a diffidence as regards his freedom. And he goes on, "In the era of ideology people believed they knew everything: in the era of 'giving aid', people don't want to know anything This change is anything but a revolution. From the primacy of reason to the primacy of feeling, we see continuing the same intolerance and the same resentment towards the fragility and the unpredictable nature of what the Greeks called 'human affairs'."²⁸ From the primacy of reason to the primacy of feelings, the outcome is this intolerance and even resentment at the fragility, the unpredictability of what are human affairs, our affections, the things that attract us.

This is the great temptation: the temptation of renunciation, of renouncing the thirst for truth, the longing for happiness that man is. This becomes a diffidence towards freedom and an annoyance, an intolerance and a resentment for what is human, just as it expresses itself in each one of us, thinking of the woman you love, the man you love, your children, your work, the need to express yourself, to risk, to build a positivity in the world that is not transient.

Schlier speaks of this systematic lie that tries to reduce reality to non-being, man's openness to closedness, reality to appearances. What is the work of the enemy, of evil one? "Such non being does he communicate to the cosmos, and he allows it to prevail there, as in his kingdom; so that the world is experienced as an unreal world of an unreal being. In this way, he instils in man, through the world, the lie of an apparent despotism, the lie of the appearance of despotism."²⁹

Social life, human society, life in society presumes theoretically and in practice to found itself on this renunciation of meaning, on this renunciation of happiness. This is the content of that terrible phrase of Dewey, the father of American pedagogy (and therefore of world pedagogy), that we find quoted in *The Religious Sense* "To abandon the pursuit of reality and the search for absolute and immutable value can seem like a sacrifice. But this renunciation is the condition of entering upon a vocation of greater vitality. The search for values to be secured and shared by all, because buttressed in the foundations of social life, is a quest in which philosophy would have no rivals but collaborators among men and woman of good will."³⁰

The search for values that can be secured and shared by all, because buttressed in the foundations of social life, buttressed in the end by the power: this is the proposal - it boils down to this - that lies at the basis of the new civil religion of neo-paganism, as the religion that guarantees society its values.

Gian Enrico Rusconi observes, "The construction of an ethical, personal, civil and political world while ignoring the God-hypothesis is the most coherent and radical version of man's assumption of full moral responsibility."³¹

To abandon the search of reality, for absolute value, to abandon the search for meaning in order to build a religion made of ethical values, of rites and cult that can be acceptable by everyone: this is the religion of appearances, the religion of power. "Because", observes Flores d'Arcais, "for man of disenchantment and finiteness (the atheist) what counts is the ethical choice. And whoever agrees with it. The choice, whatever be the motivation."³²

It is a question of the emergence of a new religion, a new cult, where the myth and the irrational blend together with the presumption of a common ethic founded on the renunciation of the truth, of happiness, of the possibility that the answer to this cry may break through, may happen. We go back to what religion was in the Roman empire: the cult of the gods, rites as civil actions ("The things that are always

and that never happen," Saturninus called them) everything becomes blocked, controlled, everything becomes humiliation of the thirst for truth and reduction of the desire for happiness.

3. Man demands an answer to himself that is Mystery

Cardinal Ratzinger, in his conference at the Sorbonne, stressed that Christianity entered into history, into time and space as love for reality, not as a myth, not as fantasy, not as a fable, but as love for man and his destiny, love for man as he is born of his father and mother, love for the demand for truth, for happiness that man is, "In Christianity rationality became religion and no longer its adversary." Man can no longer be satisfied in saying "I am humiliated," "I don't hope." Ratzinger goes on, "Man is not satisfied with such a judgement. Because if he does not know where he comes from and why he exists, is he not perhaps in his whole being a failed creature? The apparently indifferent farewell to the truth about God and about the essence of our T,' the apparent satisfaction at no longer having to concern oneself with all this is deceiving. Man cannot resign himself to being and remaining, in what is essential, a man born blind. The farewell to truth cannot ever be definitive."³⁴ Man cannot stand before reality as the blind man in Pascoli's poem, because if I renounce - out of prejudice, or falsehood - this "escape hatch" that in things, in reality, refers me beyond, to something other than myself, I am standing before things (my wife's pain, her sickness, the great test of the death of a child, that urgent job that is pressing, the pain of feeling emarginated) just like that blind man, alone, afraid.

"O perhaps someone, invisible, sees me, hears me./ It is great and horrid: the wind/ blows playing amongst her dense locks./ She sits and looks at me. O you whom I don't know but can hear,/ tell me if in your eyes there is war or peace!/ Tell me where I am! And she [he is speaking of death] is there, with her chin in her hand, silently watching me."³⁵

The renunciation of the question of happiness, the renunciation of the question of truth are the irrational, therefore inhuman denial of the possibility that the question have an answer: reality, instead of being a promise, a positivity keeps silent. Yet what Ratzinger says is true, "Man cannot resign himself to being and remaining, in what is essential, a man born blind. The farewell to truth cannot ever be definitive."³⁶

Man is a question, precisely because there is an answer. Man is a question precisely because there is a meaning. And how do I realise

it? How does thus impetus awaken once again with the dawn of each day ("Before the break of dawn")?³⁷ It is first of all in the impact with reality as it is, it is in living this piece of data, its imposing evidence. Because to say, "It's an illusion," "I renounce it," means projecting darkness, as the beginning of blindness, the darkness of preconception, the darkness of prejudice on a piece of data.

Fr Giussani affirms at the conclusion of that fantastic tenth chapter of *The Religious Sense*, "What is the formula of man. the formula for the journey to the meaning of things? To live reality. The experience of that hidden implication, that arcane, mysterious presence in the eyes of whoever opens himself to things, within the attraction that things awaken, within the beauty, the awe full of gratitude, of comfort, of hope, because these things move in such a way as to serve me, to be of use to me; and these things have me inside them, too, me in whom what is, concealed, hidden becomes near, because it is here that it is making me, and speaks to me of good and evil: how can this experience be kept alive, this complex yet simple experience, this enormously rich experience of which the heart of man is constituted, that is the heart of man and therefore the heart of nature, the heart of the cosmos? How can it become powerful? In the impact with reality."³⁸ In following, he says some pages before, the "attraction of reality." *Omnis creatura boner.*³⁹ everything is good, everything is positive. Why? First of all just because it is. It is there as a sign of Him who makes things be, as a sign of Being. Reality does not keep silent (it doesn't "look at me and keep silent").⁴⁰ everything cries out something else, all things cry out: "further on."⁴¹

So the very being of things and the impact with reality reawaken the need for truth, this need for happiness, for perfection, for fulfilment to which our freedom is called, and which is the nature of our freedom. Our freedom is called to adhere to this attraction, with the same simplicity a child has before his mother who calls him and before his father who takes him by the hand and leads him along the way.

4. *Tam Pater nemo*

We have to acknowledge the existence of an Other, acknowledge the existence of the Mystery. It is not a philosophical acknowledgement, it is not a mechanical demonstration. It is acknowledging the existence of the Mystery when the Mystery is perceived and welcomed like you welcome something you are thankful for, something alive to which

you are thankful. It is the supreme discovery, a discovery that is the work of the Mystery itself in us, the discovery that the Spirit of God begins to introduce through the being of things, through the reality of our life: it is the discovery of something else, that the Mystery is something else, that Being which makes all things is something else.

You, you are. Being presents itself to us because it exists. It does not present itself as an abstract principle, but as something existing: "I am You who make me," says Fr Giussani in the tenth chapter already-quoted. I subsist thanks to something else, "I stand up because I lean on another. I am because I am made. Like my voice, the echo of a vibration of mine, if I stop the vibration the voice is no more. Like the jet of water that derives completely from the source. Like the flower that depends in all its growth on the root."⁴²

"I am you who make me." The event of the "I" begins by saying You to the Mystery, even before you know its face, because man cannot by himself know the face of the Mystery, but he feels, he senses that Being is not an abstract, cold, empty principle: it is an existence that makes me be. it is a paternity. This is the first effect of the Spirit of God in reality, in the cosmos and in the point in which the cosmos becomes awareness, becomes our "L" the perception of a familiarity of Being as existence, as existence that generates in this instant.

"This is why the Bible says of God, *Tarn Pater nemo*,¹ no-one is father like him, because the father that we know in experience is the one who gives the surge, the beginning of a life that, from the first instant it comes to be, breaks away and goes its own way. Whereas God, father in every instant, is conceiving me *now*. No-one is a father, a generator like him."⁴³

Bobbio nostalgically refers to this when he observes, "Sometimes, thinking of the death of someone particularly dear (for example my father) I know that that person I have loved is no more. And whether or not there is something of him in another place - I don't know where - has absolutely no importance for me, The person whom I have loved was that particular way of smiling, of making us play, of reaching us in the country at the weekend when we were on holiday, our waiting at the gate for him to come and then greeting him joyfully: this I know for sure is no more."⁴⁴ But as he says this there is something that cries out. "It's not true," and this cry is the cry of our freedom that, even as it says no, is really waiting, is at the threshold, it is at the gate of that house, waiting.

It is a tiny sliver of freedom and it can say no to Him in this moment, like a jet of water from the spring, it generates us. But it is

an instant, it is an instant of being able to say yes, "Father, no father like him."⁴⁵

"What is man that you should keep him in mind, mortal man that you care for him?"⁴⁶ Man is the awareness of self, as I am You who make me. Man, in all his fragility, in all his capacity for falsehood, in all his weakness, is the greatness of this freedom that acknowledges, like a thread of entreaty, the Being that makes him: *Tarn pater nemo*.

So I end with these verses of Novalis: "Even if all were to say no, I will always acknowledge you; gratitude must not die on earth: I will be faithful to you. Comfort of the world, come! I await you, free from all encumbrance."⁴⁷

Saturday 20 May, afternoon

• SECOND MEDITATION

... and how does he come to know it

During the entrance and exit:

Sergej Rachmninor, Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra nos. 2 e 3, op. 18,

S. Wislocki, Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra,

"Spirto Gentii, " Deutsche Granunophon

Fr Pino. I read the telegram sent us by His Excellency Mgr Filippo Santoro, auxiliary bishop of Rio:

"Dearest Fr Giussani, I am near to you and to all our friends of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation during these Spiritual Exercises that are taking place in the Jubilee Year of the Lord. At the beginning of this millennium there is a continuous wonder seeing the actions of the Holy Father and his witness. As you told us in the month of May, 'There is a nothingness that is not lost'. By the strength of the Spirit and through Our Lady, may our company be really the first echo of salvation, of a new human condition. I am really grateful, because through the encounter with the charism born from you, the great presence of Christ has become an event for me and an announcement for the world. With lively gratitude and with the Lord's blessing, Filippo Santoro."

Here is the Telegram from His Excellency Mgr Angelo Scola.

"Dearest Fr Giussani. the question of man and of the maturation of his self-awareness - 'What is man and how can he get to know it' - emerges in every circumstance and in every relationship. Anyone who is minimally attentive, perceives that Jesus Christ, the grace that surrounds freedom on all sides, never forces it but always turns to it as in appeal, inviting it to decide. Each one's freedom, by its nature always in action, thus in a very personal way, encounters the question, 'And what am I?' Limitation and sin make this interrogative dramatic and bring Christ's great victory into relief in a wonderful way.

Dearest Fr Giussani, your comment at Easter on the verses *Quos redemisti, tū conserva, Christe* helps us to understand that enduring in this perspective does not mean emptying freedom of its drama, but letting it rest in the certainty that an Other, a friendly Presence is accompanying us to the Father. May the humble plea for this perseverance that you have pointed out, once again in profound harmony with the Holy Father, in the recitation of the Holy Rosary, accompany each one of us in the daily journey of edification of a conscious T and of a communion that is more and more visible. The charism that has been given you, in which by pure grace we partake, urges us thus to offer ourselves for the mission of God's Holy Church.

In the Lord, Angelo Scola."

1. "So what are you, my God?" The expectation of a Sign

"Persevering in this perspective does not mean emptying freedom of its drama, but letting it rest in the certainty that an Other, a friendly Presence is accompanying us to the Father" (Angelo Scola). It is this freedom that acknowledges the greatness of a Presence that it cannot measure, nor define, nor presume to enclose within the horizon, limitless though it be, of the question. It is the cry of St Augustine at the beginning of his *Confessions*, "So what are you, my God? What else, if not the Lord God? For who is really lord apart from the Lord, who is God apart from our God? O highest, best, strongest, most omnipotent. most merciful and just, most remote and most present, most beautiful and most powerful, stable and ungraspable, immutable, you change all things, never new, never decrepit, renewer of all things, who unknown to them take the proud to decadence; always active, always quiet, who collect without need; who carry and fill and use, who create and feed and bring to maturity, who seek though you lack nothing. You love but without folly, you are jealous and serene, you repent but without sorrowing, you get angry and yet you are calm, you change your works but not your plan, you recover what you find and never lost; you are never without, yet enjoy gain; never miserly, yet demand interest; one lends to you in order to have you his debtor, but who has anything that is not yours? You pay debts without owing anyone anything, you cancel debts without losing anything. What have I said, my God, my life, my holy sweetness? What does anyone say who speaks of You? Yet woe to him who doesn't speak of you, because he is a dumb chatterbox."⁴⁸

"What does one who speaks of You say?" What can man say to the Mystery, to the Being that makes all things? What can we say? How many times do I speak of you and I don't say anything, how many times is speaking reduced to an image, to a project, to a feeling? How much we reduce of our need for truth, of our need to know you? Because if this is the case we can chatter, we can say many things and we are dumb. Precisely because your answer is in the fact of the question, but I can't, we can't, man can't really deduce it from the question. man can't really imagine it. Yet he desires, he desires that this You be a reality that can be perceived, experienced, encountered.

After all the religious journeying of mankind, with all the millions of attempts that characterise it and re-echo in the attempts of every man's heart, of every man's freedom; in the end this whole journey, this whole struggle, this whole fretting in the existence of peoples, of man's existence, is in order to perceive by means of facts, by means of something within time and space, the relationship with this mysterious You. All this fretting is not in view of a content of thought, of man's imagining, but of the possibility of touching, of reaching, of touching the hem of the Infinite. This is why all religions feel that they coincide in some way with historical facts or, through a go-between confusedly sought for, with cosmic realities, with realities of nature, or they trust in other men. they try to follow a religious genius, the interpreter of the thought of their lineage.

This is what Eliot describes in the seventh of his *Choruses from "The Rock":*

"In the beginning God created the world. Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness was upon the face of the deep. / And when there were men, in their various ways, they struggled in torment towards GOD/ Blindly and vainly, for man is a vain thing, and man without God is a seed upon the wind: driven this way and that, and finding no place of lodgement and germination. / They followed the light and the shadow, and the light led them forward to light and the shadow led them to darkness. / Worshipping snakes or trees, worshipping devils rather than nothing: crying for life beyond life, for ecstasy not of the flesh./Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness on the face of the deep. /And the Spirit moved upon the face of the water. / And men who turned towards the light and were known of the light invented the Higher Religions; and the Higher Religions were good And led men from light to light, to knowledge of Good and Evil. But their light was ever surrounded and shot with darkness / As the air of temperate seas

is pierced by the still dead breath of the Arctic Current; / And they came to an end, a dead end stirred with a flicker of life, / And they came to the withered ancient look of a child that has died of starvation. / Prayer wheels, worship of the dead, denial of this world, affirmation of rites with forgotten meanings / In the restless wind-whipped sand, or the hills where the wind will not let the snow rest. / Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness on the face of the deep."⁴⁹

Amongst all the histories, all these attempts, there is one that is clearer and more coherent: it is the history of that people, the smallest of all the people of the earth, or rather at first it was no people: the Hebrew people. God identifies himself, begins to identify himself with this reality that he draws out of nothing into historical existence.

The beginning is the great promise made by God to that man Abram. Go and see it in chapter 17 of the book of Genesis. "Out of you will come descendants more numerous than the sand on the shore of the sea, more numerous than the stars in the sky: and your descendants will have no end."⁵⁰

The adventures of this people are the adventures of man taken, called, whose face, whose identity is marked by this choice, marked by this preference so mysterious and yet so concrete, so real.

Let's read once more the great event described in chapter 32 of *Genesis*. Jacob fights the whole night with the mysterious presence of God, whose face he wants to see and cannot see; this Presence blocks his way and, before blessing him, tells him, "no longer will you be called Jacob, but Israel, which means 'You have fought with God'."⁵¹ He is marked in the flesh, struck in his flesh, so much so that, from that moment, he will walk with a limp, his hip dislocated. He is marked for ever by the dramatic relationship with this Presence.

Then God speaks to Moses, who in the high point of that long journey in the desert, of that history made of long years of unfaithfulness, of betrayal, and renewal of the covenant, thanks to God's faithfulness, who asks him, "Show me your face. If you do not walk with us, we will not move from here. Let me see your face, reveal your Presence to me."⁵²

David, too, is chosen, chosen to be king, he who was the smallest in the family. He, too, betrayed, he, too, makes the power God has assigned him an instrument of his own plan. "I want to build you a house, make you a dwelling place, a dwelling place for You, Most High, since you are living under a shepherd's tent." And God tells him, "No, you are not the one to build a house for me; I will build a house for you, I will build a dwelling."⁵³ It is the announcement that

David does grasp completely, because before Gods' simplicity, man is always rather bewildered, attracted and bewildered.

Another king reacts in the same way before the announcement of the prophet Isaiah, "'Ask the Lord for a sign'. 'No I will not ask the Lord for a sign.' 'O hard-headed men, who are you to challenge, to measure, to guess the moves, the freedom of this Infinite, the freedom of the Lord of history, the freedom of the Lord of time and space, the moves of the Most High? The Lord will give you a sign'." ⁵⁴

2. "The Word was made flesh", Born of a woman

Eliot goes on "Then came at a predetermined moment: a moment in time and of time, a moment not out of time, but in time, in what we call history: transecting, bisecting the world of time. A moment of time, a moment in time, but not like a moment of time. A moment in time, but time was made through that moment, because without the meaning, there is no time and that moment of time gave the meaning." ⁵⁵

Peguy writes "It is a unique hour in history, it is a culminating hour. It is a unique moment, it is wholly the end of a world and wholly the beginning of another. And on one of those fine June days when there is no longer any night, on which there are no longer shadows, on which one day greets the next, it is the last point of the evening and at the same time the first point of the dawn. It is the last point of the promise and at the same time the first point of the realisation of the promise." ⁵⁶

Born of a woman. The Word was made flesh. "Before the incarnation", writes St Bernard, "man was unable to think of God except through the image that he made of Him in his heart. God was absolutely incomprehensible and inaccessible, invisible and unimaginable. Now, instead, He has wanted to become comprehensible, visible and imaginable. In what way? In a virgin's womb. So truth springs up from the earth. As a mystery of the Lord, an Angel is great, but even greater is Mary who merited to be the Mother." ⁵⁷

In "Word among us" two years ago, *The Sign of Signs* we read, "The Mystery became a man. The mystery, in order to communicate himself to me. becomes a man! How did we come to know it? How do we know it now? How did man come to understand it? How does man come to know it *now*? Through a phenomenon, an event that struck Mary that evening of the 25th March, such that, intelligent as she was

in her profound simplicity, familiar with the religiosity of a people that with the Lord's help, with God's inspiration, had generated the Bible, she felt, she perceived the presence of a great reality, a divine reality through the one who was speaking to her in that moment. 'Let it happen to me according to your word'. She accepted at once, and this is the source of mysterious things that, if you are faithful to your road, the Lord will make you understand more and more.⁵⁸

Efrem the Syrian writes, "My son, your dwelling place is higher than all others, and yet you wanted to make me your dwelling. The heavens are too small to contain your splendour, but I, the poorest of your creatures, I carry you. 'Blessed is your splendour in the place of your dwelling'. This dwelling is with me. my womb is your home! Your brightness rests on my lap, the throne of your majesty is held in my arms."⁵⁹ The Spirit that hovered over the waters, the Spirit that makes things be, that gives life to things has not remained beyond man's comprehension. It has invaded, has become one thing with a flesh, with the flesh of a woman. It is through a woman that life is given by the Spirit, given by the Mystery.

Efrem again, "It is a source of great wonder that someone can contemplate the marvel of how God came down and made himself reside in a womb, and how this Being clothed himself with the body of a man, spending nine months in a womb, without reducing himself because of such a dwelling. My God became man in a pure way, and he entered the womb in creation. Before there was no-one who would dare to look at God and remain alive, but today all those who have seen Him are saved from the second death. He was in the womb like a child, though the whole world was filled with Him."⁶⁰ Born of woman.

Man's need for meaning, his need for happiness is taken up by the Spirit as the origin of reality, in a human being, Mary, in whom the answer has been dictated, because she is mother. God becomes man through a woman, a woman is the most carnal sense of the word. It is a woman who gives the answer its clarity.

"What shall we say?" It's St Basil who asks himself, "O man. what can we do with you? As long as God stays in heaven, you do not look for him. Now that he comes down to you and converses with you through his body, you are not ready to accept him, but you look for the reason why you have been able to become familiar with God. Learn then that God is in the flesh, because this cursed flesh had to be sanctified, this enfeebled flesh had to be strengthened, this flesh at enmity with God had to be brought back to His friendship, this flesh that had

fallen from Paradise had to be taken back there. And what is the workshop of this economy? The body of a holy Virgin. And what are the active principles of this generation? The Holy Spirit and the overshadowing power of the Most High."⁶¹

"This enfeebled flesh had to be strengthened." All the delusion of our limitation, all the apparent non-keeping of the promise in our fleshly existence, all the desire that decays into Utopia and censures the hope because of the burden of our limitation and our pain, finds an answer: it is a Presence, a human Presence.

God did not answer the demand for meaning with words, but with a presence: the Lord is born of a woman's womb. The Lord, the Lord of heaven and earth. The Psalmist cries, "Come Lord to judge, to exalt, to save all the humble of the earth."⁶²

The Mystery, which is the origin of everything, that literally identifies himself with a particular, with some thing that is born in this world: in the great plain that is this world, a blade of grass that is the Mystery made flesh, made visible.

3. The encounter with this Presence, the form of all relationships

I read once more from *The Sign of Signs*, "In Jesus, God appeared to man as in a sign, because the Mystery could not be identified with the face and the quantitative body of that man, it could not be identified and reveal itself with what that man was saying, but through his physical figure and through what he was saying people were struck, provided they were simple and open, provided they were truly humble. The people were open. So, to peasants, to fishermen, to some people he had talked to it had become evident that He was something different. And he answered 'I am the Mystery that makes you. You are made of me and by me. The whole world is made by me'."⁶³

How does this discovery happen? How does the event of this humanity happen, this sign in the flesh, so exceptionally human?

It is called encounter. An encounter is the event in which this Presence reveals its meaning, in which it arouses a question - "What are you looking for?" - and he offers himself as an answer, as a positive hypothesis, as the meaning of the whole of reality: "I am the Mystery that makes you. You are made of me and by me. The whole world is made by me." It is called encounter, and there is nothing simpler, there is nothing more unexpected and unpredictable, more definitive in our life than this encounter, the encounter with this Presence,

an encounter thanks to which everything begins to be seen, looked at, dealt with and preferred in a new way, in a different way.

It is through a human relationship that his novelty, that the mysterious novelty of a Fact that deepens our questioning and at the same time changes it, makes it a new, a different way of looking, enters our life.

We could say, making synthetic use of an expression that has often struck our heart, that an encounter with this Presence becomes the form of all our relationships. Because, from the announcement of the one who brought the announcement into our life, the announcement of this Presence, we have learned to deal with everything in the perspective of this novelty.

I want to read one of the pages of *L'attrattiva Gesit* that is most dear to me. Here we can understand how this different way of seeing things imposes itself in the tenderness of a human relationship, in a humanity that introduces us to the meaning of everything, to the beauty of the truth, to the positivity of reality.

It is Fr Giussani who is speaking, "Once, when I was a young altar boy, a young seminarian, but already wearing the cassock (in those days you had to wear it from the age of ten), I was home for the Easter holidays. As I was going to Mass in the morning (the first mass in those days was at five thirty), I remember at a certain point there was a windswept sky, as Barbara Tosatti wrote, "like a day in March, cold and shining"... My mother was walking briskly in the cold clear air, and there was only one star in the sky. just one - and it was the evening star, the last of the morning - and my mother said to me, 'Look how beautiful the world is and how great God is!' I was ten or twelve years old and I have never forgotten this phrase. An encounter gives form to the was in which you see things, 'How beautiful the world is and how great God is'."⁶⁴ It is an encounter and, if we are here, we have had this encounter. This encounter has entered the horizon of our life as a preference, as a choice, as an election. We have received the angel's message, we have been invested with this message.

4. Touched by the Mystery, in Christ's possession.

That Fact, that moment of time, that moment in time, but not like a moment of time, is not a fact of two thousand years ago. It began two thousand years ago, but since that Man died and rose again he fills time and space, he is the Lord of time and space, his body lives in

time and space, his bodily reality is the way in which He conquers time and space and permeates history.

From generation to generation we can say, "Blessed" to her who bore the flesh of Christ in her womb, here and now. When we say, "*Veni Sancte Spiritus*," we are indicating the mysterious condition, the mysterious energy with which the risen Christ invests time and space. When we ask, *Veni per Mariam* we are indicating the human reality, the human circumstance of flesh and blood, the materiality of existence through which this lordship of Christ, this power that Christ has over man's life, over man's energies, over his reason and his freedom invests our life, invests it with this perception of victory, with this power of resurrection, with the re-happening of that tenderness and that strength that struck Andrew and John, shocked them and won them.

"The Risen Christ is God's victory over the world." This is this year's Easter poster. "His resurrection from the dead is the cry that he wants to resound in the soul of each of us. The positivity of the being of things, that ultimate reasonableness for which what is born is not born for destruction. 'All this is assured. I assure you. I have risen in order to make you certain that all that is in you. all that is born with you shall not perish'."⁶⁵

What reality is it? How does this strength, this clarity, this certainty reach us? How is the fragility of our flesh saved? It is through His body, it is through his human reality that, mysteriously, coincides with His presence today. The reality of his risen body is called Church. The human presence through which Christ invests our existence is called "Church." It is through the Church that our life is continuously awakened to the truth of a meaning that is possible, real and concrete, and our freedom is moved as affection and passion for reality.

It is important to grasp and stress three factors of this reality.

a) The first is that through this humanity, this reality, Christ, the Risen Lord, communicates to us a sure ultimate knowledge; he communicates to us, he re-awakens in us the taste and the drama of a present meaning, a taste for what is essential and a taste for the totality of the meaning of things - as the article *That great strength of the Pope on his knees* reminds us. "The Christian is attached to no-one but Jesus. All the ideologies have an aspect for which man is sure of at least one thing that he himself does, and it is that which he will never want to give up nor allow to be challenged. But the Christian knows

that his efforts and all he possesses or does must always yield before the truth. So he is the only true fighter for the purification of the world and for justice. Because justice is relationship with God, justice is God's plan; so whoever has met Christ does not wait an instant before helping the world to be better, or at least more bearable."⁶⁶

The Church is the go-between in a communication of the truth, through **authority** and **tradition**, this channel in which our freedom, as the need for meaning, runs free towards its destiny. This is why authority, the Pope and those in the Church who share responsibility for the whole people correspond to this image that struck us. "It reminds me of Spartacus of old, who rises up with all the stature of his humanity in a supreme gesture of freedom, as an example offered for the always-desired happiness of each and everyone."⁶⁷

b) There is a second factor, a very concrete one, albeit in its ephemeral materiality, of the mode with which the power, the grace of Christ, Christ, His presence, reaches and moves our freedom. They are those simple actions that prolong in time and space the actions of salvation, the actions through which Christ gives life, has given life again, has healed, forgiven, brought back to life. This second factor is called **sacrament**, sacramental dynamics. Amongst all the actions, the sacrament is the most gratuitous, because its only reason is the affirmation of the death and resurrection of Christ as the meaning of existence and of history. Through each one of these actions - first of all through our Baptism, that makes us part of Christ's life, part of His body, members of each other- man acknowledges what Christ is, affirms His glory and witnesses it in the world.

c) For us these factors - the fact that He is contemporary, the event of this presence, the source of truth and clarity, the source of beauty, strength for the journey, the source of freedom and creativity, of risk, of construction, of passion for the world - for us all this becomes familiar in life through a face, an accent, the concreteness of a home; it has the ephemeral yet imposing face of a company, of a reality through which the Spirit, the giver of life, the Spirit of Jesus has invested, touched each one of us. This reality, this gratuitousness that moves, invests, provokes, calls urges and drives each one of us in the great challenge to the world is called **charism**. This gratitude in our life, this gratitude that becomes an impetus of gratuitousness, that becomes a looking at things in a completely different way, the experi-

ence of someone "who is pleased with you, of one who forgives you is called charism."⁶⁵

This is why the truth of the reminder on the value, on the awareness of our **unity** we have been given, just a few weeks ago. by the charism, by the one who is our father, touched us profoundly, "It is only in Jesus that we can throw ourselves into unity as the measure and criterion of what we do."

The reasoning that develops our awareness and makes possible the development of judgement- and therefore an awareness that determines more maturely our understanding of, and the form of our works - must keep in mind that unity constitutes the fundamental category for grasping and bringing to definition the reality with which our intelligence relates. But there is a final observation: unity is possible only if God has become man. It is in him that everything converges to express the passion for the unity of all things."⁶⁴

"It is in him that everything converges to express the passion for the unity of all things:" the unity of my "I" as certainty, certainty that is born of the awareness of being His, Christ's, the certainty of belonging, certainty of mercy.

"Quos redemisti, tu conserva, Cliriste," safeguard us Lord, in the salvation for which you deigned to enter our life. There is a nothingness, there is a nothingness that is not lost. A thing that is nothing could be lost, but no, it is saved!"⁷⁰ So let every one of us, when he looks at others - when we look at each other - weep for joy at the evidence that Our Lady, as the emergence of a redeeming novelty, will wholly save in her Son the existence to which we have been called.

It is this certainty, this gratitude at being forgiven, it is this newness of life that becomes an impetus of communication, a passion for construction, in the materiality of our daily life, when we feel the absurdity of pain and of trial, when we feel the shame of our betrayal, when we feel our limitation. It is this certainty, this gratitude that we want to communicate in the first place. We want to cry out to the world; and the first world is our "I." The first world in which this jolt of change, this jolt of newness begins is my "I" and through me it can reach others. "Joy is the certitude that comes into the world for the fact of having been touched by the Mystery, in Christ's possession."⁷¹

I conclude with a final witness of this joy. of this abandonment both in beautiful and ugly circumstances, the painful test and the impetus, the dawning, the wonder at the fruits that mature in the history of our people. They are four lines of Ada Negri. "Now, God that I have

always loved - I love you knowing that I love you; and the ineffable certainty that everything was just, even the pain, everything was good, even my evil, that you were everything for me and you are now. makes me tremble with a joy greater than death."⁷²

HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL JAMES ERANCIS STAFFORD
PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

Dear Brethren, I am very happy for this opportunity to celebrate Jesus' Passover with you.

The liturgical period we are now living recalls to us the events that took place between the Lord's Resurrection and Pentecost. The readings tell us of the first steps taken by the Church and present to us the great protagonists of those events: Mary, Peter, John, and Paul, the brightest stars in the constellation of saints, to which the Pope is adding in this Jubilee Year other wonderful figures, witnesses to faith in Christ in all conditions of life and all the corners of the earth.

In his address to members of the ecclesial movements united in St. Peter's Square on the eve of Pentecost two years ago, the Holy Father highlighted the two coessential aspects of what makes up the Church, that is, the charismatic and the institutional ones. But already in his talk to the Roman Curia in 1987 and in his Apostolic Letter *Mulieris dignitatem* of 1988, the Pope had referred to a theology of the Christian experience based on the archetypes or models of faith, founded on the relationship between Mary, Peter, John, and Paul.

In 1987 he had occasion to say. "The Marian profile is also, and perhaps even more, fundamental and characteristic of the Church than her Apostolic and Petrine profile to which it is fundamentally united.... The Marian dimension of the Church predates the Petrine one, without however being separated from it or any less complementary." In 1988, similarly, he wrote. "The Church is both 'Marian' and 'Apostolic-Petrine.'" (no. 27) In these two terms, instead of referring directly to the charismatic and institutional aspects of the Church's constitution, the Pope preferred to speak of "the Church in her own essence," a Church with a profile that is at the same time Marian and Apostolic or Petrine. There are nonetheless close analogies between

the Marian-Pauline profile of the Church and her charismatic dimension, as well as between her Petrine-Apostolic profile and her institutional dimension.

The references made by the Pope to the Marian-Pauline and the Petrine-Apostolic dimensions of the Church give us a new way of looking at the theological *locus* of the new groups. Given the rich potential for ideas and for deeper study that this teaching offers us concerning the nature of the Church, I would like to dwell on it for a moment.

As we have said, the New Testament presents a constellation of four disciples who have become the paradigms of the Christian experience: Mary, John the Evangelist, Peter, and Paul. By the term constellation I mean that these four followers of Jesus manifest the essential relationships and structures of the Church for all time and all places.

What does this statement mean? The nature of the Incarnation demands that Jesus carry out his mission of redemption through a community, and specifically through those who were closest to Him during his earthly life. Three of the disciples mentioned, Mary, John, and Peter, were the persons closest to Him, while the fourth, Paul, says of himself that he was "last of all." (1 *Cor* 15:8) These four persons form what has been called the Christological constellation.

The law of the Incarnation requires also that the constant presence of Jesus next to his disciples after the Ascension take a human form. The experience that Jesus has with God cannot be communicated in all its fullness. Having ascended to the Father (*Jn* 6:38ff), He is offered to those eyewitnesses who served Him, not looking for honor for themselves, and who were willing to offer themselves for Him and for others, all the way to martyrdom. They proclaim that they have seen, touched, and heard the Father in Jesus, as Paul says in today's reading. (*Acts* 13:47)

The relationships, narrated in the Gospels, of these four persons with Jesus and with each other set up a model or paradigm that is valid and necessary for the community of disciples of all times, as they present characteristics that can provide the norm for the Church in all times and all places.

What, then, is the model governing the relationships between the charismatic realities on one hand and bishops and priests on the other? A meditation on the four stars of the Christological constellation helps us to understand the mission of movements like Communion and Liberation in the Church today. The two texts by the Pope quoted

above offer us another point for theological reflection, it too based on the Scriptures. The Holy Father, in fact, clearly sees the new movements as charismatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The relationships between the new communities and the hierarchy of the Church can thus imitate the first community gathered together around Jesus, especially the great figures of Peter, Paul, and Mary.

One of the Twelve, the one whom Jesus ruefully called a "scandal" and a "stumbling block" was then placed by Him as the foundation for the entire Church. The Petrine and Apostolic succession rests on a horizontal historical dimension that begins in Caesarea of Philippi. Peter has the right to claim authority in matters of doctrine and guidance and to impose an order for unity. This prerogative, which is his alone, does not, however, isolate him from the others, especially from the Marian and Pauline profile of the Church. Let's now dwell briefly on this last aspect.

Paul, too, has a founding mission and is equally present and alive in the Church. He is added to the Twelve, even if he was not chosen by them. While Peter asks his followers to be "good shepherds," Paul describes himself as "a spectacle to the whole universe, both angelic and human." (1 Cor 4:9) His vocation was authenticated by the Twelve, and he was well aware that this recognition was absolutely essential for his apostolic ministry.

The Pauline experience of faith and testimony in the New Testament moves vertically from heaven. His position, chosen directly by the Risen Christ and recognized by the college of the Twelve, is unique in itself and not open to succession, if not by analogy; there can be charismatic vocations, whose official recognition and insertion into the structure are, so to speak, imposed by divine intervention.

The Christological constellation of Peter and Paul gives a new and different view of the mission of the ecclesial movements in the Church. Now let's look at her Marian profile.

The Church's Marian dimension reveals the action of the charisms of the Holy Spirit, from the very moment of her response, her *fiat-let* it be as you have said-to the word of God. There cannot be true objectivity in the Church, that is to say, a persuasive exercise of the hierarchical offices, which does not presuppose that she remain contemplative, an aspect pertaining to the Holy Spirit, and in turn to Mary. The Word (institutional) and the Spirit (charismatic), distinct but united, of the Father are revealed in a sacramental and archetypal way by the two disciples, Peter and Mary. The Petrine-hierarchical-charismatic

dimension of the Church always presupposes the dimension of the Marian-charismatic working of the Holy Spirit, to whom it owes its origin. The Marian dimension achieves fullness in the Petrine-sacramental dimension of the Church. These two dimensions, Marian and Petrine, ensure the union between objectivity and subjectivity, between the Word and the Spirit, in the Church.

The Papal magisterium has offered us many viewpoints regarding the new ecclesial movements, as well as regarding the sacramental nature of the apostolic succession and the Christological constellation. The second in particular, concerning the Christological constellation, opens up new perspectives for continuing our prayerful reflection on the new spring of the Church, of which the ecclesial movements are the harbingers.

BEFORE THE FINAL BLESSING

I am very pleased with these hymns from the States. Sweet Little Jesus is lovely, and it is very close to the spirituality of St Paul of the Cross, one of the patron saints of my home parish when I was a kid. Thank you for proving the similarities between the Negro Hymns in the United States and this great figure of the spiritual renewal of the 18th century in Italy. Before Mass I was introduced as the Head of the Pontifical Council for the Laity: this means that I am responsible for and the head of the Lay Movements. I must confess I do not feel worthy of such a position. The greatest fruits of the Second Vatican Council are happening precisely among the Laity. I do not feel worthy of occupying the position the Holy Father gave me. Yet I am happy, albeit in this profound humility, bordering on humiliation. Because, my brothers and sisters, I have learnt a lot from you, and from all your friends who belong to the other Ecclesial Movements within the Church. Today I have given thanks, as we have heard, all of us have given thanks for this immense gift of the Spirit, that I have watched in communion unite us in the Body of Christ.

Sunday 21 May, morning

m ASSEMBLY

Daring the entrance and exit:

Sergei Rachmaninov, "Vespers," op.37,

A. V. Svesnikov, *Chorus of the State Academy of Russian Songs,*
Melodia Etirodisc

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Coronation Mass, K J17,
H. Von Karajan - Battle, Schmidt, Winberg, Furlanetto,
Vienna Phi/harmonic Orchestra, Deutsche Granunophon

Angelus

Morning Prayer

Giancarlo Cesana. As usual we received hundreds of questions. We have chosen seven of them. All the questions concerned the first lesson; the second lesson was merely touched on by one or two questions, and this means that, rather than correcting our behaviour, we need above all to correct our way of looking; and Giussanis judgement is quite true: "What is lacking in our relationships is the memory of Jesus."⁷³ Otherwise we cannot answer the second question of these Exercises, "How does man come to know who he is?" Faced with this affirmation of Giussani many ask, "So, if the memory of Christ is lacking what must we do?" The first thing to do is to acknowledge the truth of a judgement. If a judgement is true, the question leads us to what the judgement proposes.

Here is the first question: "What helps my freedom to acknowledge that reality is wholly positive in the first place because it is there?"

Julian Carron. Freedom does not subsist without reality. If freedom is the capacity to adhere, then there must be something to adhere to. If we look at experience, when we find ourselves before things, before being, how does our freedom move? It moves first of all because being is attractive, and this attraction moves my freedom making it easy for my freedom to adhere to being; it doesn't leave me the way I was before. Before something beautiful my freedom does not remain

as it was. It is awakened, it is attracted, and this is why the presence of reality, because it's there, makes it easier for my freedom to acknowledge reality.

But why is there this attraction in reality? Because, as we have studied in *The Religious Sense*, things are signs of Being, that is, they refer us beyond themselves. As we look into the depth of things, things refer us to an Other, to a You who is the consistence of reality. Everything is a sign of Him, therefore all reality, by the fact of its being there, facilitates this adherence for which our being, our freedom is made, because our freedom is made for adhering to Him.

Cesana. So the question is awakened in the impact with reality; living reality and following its attraction. What must we do when nothing appears attractive?

And I ask the next question, too. straightaway. Why does reality often seem silent, even for us who have already encountered Christ?

Carron. According to what we have said before the first part of the question is not true, because reality always contains an attraction, but many times we confuse the attraction with the reaction that reality provokes in us.

Reality always reflects an original fascination in us. The first impression reality produces in us is this attractive fascination, but sooner or later the contradiction appears. This is when you have to choose. If you choose to affirm that reality is only contradictory, this means that reality does not make sense. But this goes against reason, for all the contradiction of reality cannot avoid one thing: that it is there, and if it is there it is the sign of an Other.

Many times we stop short at this contradiction. When faced with certain circumstances, with bad times, our reason stops here, and this is where we go wrong, stopping short at the appearance of reality that appears contradictory to us. Even if I am in pain at this moment. I feel the pain, but I am made by You, Christ. Either you make this passage all the time, or you are lost. Why? Because many times when we speak of reality we do away with Christ, and when we do away with Christ there is no meaning. If we stop there, if we stop at appearances, we deny that Presence which makes us live reality. But, my friends, everything is given us. all the circumstances the Lord gives us are so that we discover who He is. All life's vicissitudes are given us for this aim: so that He manifest more His glory, that is to say His truth. Without this we are not taking reality seriously.

Cesana. On this question I'd like to recall an example of Fr Giussani, recounted in *The religious sense*.¹⁴ Imagine being born with the age, the mind, the maturity you have now: the first impact with reality is the discovery of a positivity, of a fascination. Then contradiction comes, and then, as Julian said, you have to decide: what is it that constitutes being? My original impact with reality, or the negation of everything? For evil, pain, are the beginning of a negation, of something less, of a subtraction. Our reason itself pushes us towards the first hypothesis. Certainly, if we then forget Christ, we forget that to which reality leads us.

Now for the next question. "Standing before reality while acknowledging that an Other makes it and me too, makes reality itself friendly. But then, why don't we persevere in this attitude? Why is the beauty of reality, several times experienced, forgotten many times? Or, said in another way: how does it happen, that not only Bobbio, but we too, in practice renounce the meaning of things?"

Carron. We don't persevere because our "I," because of what we have heard many times, because of our weakness - which historically is even weaker because of original sin - does not resist, it decays: our "I" decays. Many times this is the problem for us. Think of a child. A child doesn't resist either, but he doesn't worry about it, he is not afraid of it. Why? Because he always has the chance to relate with his mother.

The problem is not that our "I" fails, does not resist; the real problem is that many times we are not prompted by this to make memory of Christ. Instead for a child to feel a need is the occasion for asking, for deepening his relationship with his mother, and thus every circumstance is an opportunity for the child to discover his mother's nature. Christ, the Mystery, also uses every opportunity - if we relate with Him - to reveal the nature of His being.

We are afraid because many times faced with our smallness, our weakness, instead of relating with Him, we think we can manage on our own. The issue is once again how our freedom moves before the circumstances, and therefore before Christ.

We need not worry about Christ: He knows quite well what to do...Christ, the Lord. He takes care of us through every circumstance. In all that happens to us the only problem is that we must relate with Him as beggars.

There is then another thing concerning the second half of the question. How does it happen that not only Bobbio but even we ourselves

renounce the meaning of things? Many times this renunciation is not a renunciation of the truth, but satisfaction with partial truths. Many times this is not innocent, it is a renunciation of the whole desire of our "I." Here is proved once again that we need help, we are not ourselves without a Presence to help us, lending us a hand so that our "I" be constantly awakened, so that freedom can truly adhere. It is the matter of power. We are not in a sinless world, and this often causes us to be overcome by a strength that attracts us and we need something. we need a Presence that will free us from this power, above all from this decay of ourselves.

Cesana. On this point, it is worthwhile reading *L'io, il potere. le opere*. Fr Giussani approaches the problem of power very broadly and with ample documentation, to the point of saying that the effect of power today is manifested through the reduction of the person, the reduction of his desire, so that in the end one is satisfied with less. There is a beautiful passage which says it is almost as if man were deprived of the courage to compare himself, to follow what he cannot dominate, the Mystery, but which is more him than himself. In other words, we do not copy Jacob, we do not struggle with the angel and then, we are satisfied with what we think we possess, namely our fantasy or our dreams.

Question: "How can I take in my hands all that is given me (wife, children, friends, work, the whole of reality, even that most intimate reality which is myself) without a longing to possess it, without the closure of a prejudice or the impetus of 'giving aid,' without in other words doing evil, but treating each and every one according to what is good for him, in the novelty of the Mystery that is present?"

Carron. If we look at our own experience, when and where did this happen? Where did we discover we had a relationship with reality without possessing, without prejudice? In the encounter. When we encountered Jesus.

When the event of encounter truly happens, how is the encounter reflected in us? First of all it opens up our reason, it opens wide the whole of our "I." They were watching Him speak: paying close attention to His words. It opens our reason and it makes it easy for freedom to adhere. In the encounter we have all had the experience of openness, of this victory over possession and over prejudice, and this has permitted us a true knowledge: because only when reason is so open and when freedom is not blocked by possession can man really know.

This is what Fr Giussani has been telling us in recent years: the problem is a true knowledge. So, when this happens we relate with reality (wife, children, friends, job) in a new way. But without Him we can only give in once again to prejudice and possession.

We delude ourselves thinking that after encountering Jesus once we do not need to encounter Him again every day. The event must be present, for without Him we all sink back into possession, we sink back into prejudice, and everything closes up again. It is only before a presence that everything opens up and enables us to relate with reality with an irreducible positivity, to relate with reality in its truth. The encounter with Christ makes us see things as they really are. Giussani used to us: "I see things that you don't see."⁷⁵ Why? Because he keeps always before his eyes Him who enables him to see reality according to its whole truth, according to its destiny.

Without this Presence, without this event, we can't make it, and this becomes evident every day when we fall away from this position. This falling away, though, is also the opportunity to go back to the place of the event as beggars. We have come here because of this hope, that this may re-happen in all of us once again.

Cesana. We are made to possess, to love, we are made like God! Only that in order that this be possible, we must identify with Him who alone possesses. And this is the problem I mentioned at the beginning, the problem of the second lesson.

Another question: What is it that causes us to perceive the encounter as something relegated to the past?

Carrdn. It is because we often think of the encounter as just a sentimental reflex that the impact with Christ, provokes in us, and we don't start off from the judgement of correspondance that this impact with Christ opens. When we encountered Christ, what exactly did we encounter? Is it only a question of feelings, or did we encounter the only One who corresponds to the expectation in our heart? So, if in the encounter we found that Presence that corresponds, then either we have encountered it forever, or we have never encountered it. If there is someone who corresponds to our heart, he corresponds. And we have experienced this.

Dear friends, as you know, a definitive event has happened to all of us. We have encountered Christ, and this makes life become truly dramatic, for we must remain before this You, whom we know, and not just metaphorically otherwise we wouldn't be here. We have encoun-

tered someone who corresponds, and this is why he is not confined to the past: He is, He is. He is present as on the first day (as Peguy says)⁷⁶. He is present, we cannot erase Him from life. We can trample on Him, but not erase Him, because it is a judgement and not a feeling or a reaction to what we have encountered: it is a judgement that we can nevermore erase from our eyes.

Cesana. Listen, Carron, I'll ask you a question. Very often there's the idea that correspondence is with what is to your liking.

Carron. I must say that this is one of the things in which the encounter with the Movement has helped me most. The Movement has helped me understand the objectivity of things. First of all, which is the most objective thing? My desire. And, as we have studied in *The Religious Sense*, I do not decide what the nature of my disproportion is. I am not the one to decide the depth of my desire. We can pretend to have the image of our desire, but reality puts us right, because when we define, and we attain the object of this definition, our desire proves to be greater than we thought, thus proving that it is objective, that it does not depend on the image we make of it.

Now if this desire is so objective, what corresponds is equally objective. In correspondence with this objectivity of our desire, we have encountered another objectivity that corresponds to this desire, which is Christ, and this is not subjective in the sense that we may say that today it is like this, and tomorrow it's different. This is what it's like, and we know it. This is why I always use the example of shoes: we don't even decide the size of our shoes. It is an objectivity, and for me this is a great hope, for I can make all the stupid mistakes of the world, I can go wrong, but the reality that corresponds to the desire of our "I" is only one: Christ. This is why everything becomes a road to the truth in experience; even when I go wrong, this error brings the truth before me: "It is not this, it is Him, it is only Him." So even when we go wrong even when we do evil, everything becomes a road to the truth, and this is a great hope in my life.

Cesana. "Our experience says that the whole of our desire and our commitment are not enough to produce unity. What does mean to say that unity is possible only in Jesus?"

Carron. This is the important issue of the second lesson. Unity is possible only in Jesus, because only Jesus corresponds to the heart of each of us. Our unity is founded on this objectivity. He alone corre-

sponds, He alone is the truth of each one of us. So our unity is not consensus; there is unity because He is the one who makes it possible. And since we are sinners, it is His mercy that makes this unity continuously possible, because the most acute issue for us is our evil. The true test is whether we are truly waiting for Him who has begun the good work to bring it to fulfilment according to a plan that is not ours. He is the one who continually recreates our unity, in a way that many times does not coincide with our timing.

In order to say that Jesus is the one that makes unity possible, what is Jesus? He is this presence in the flesh, as we heard yesterday in the second lesson. Without the flesh of God's presence here and now there is no unity. It is only He in his carnality (and flesh is authority, the sacraments, the charism) who makes possible what for us all is impossible.

Without this presence of Christ in history there is no more Christianity, that is, Christ is not the truth, for the truth is what lasts in time, and without this permanence of Christ in the flesh it is impossible to encounter what corresponds and to have a sure foundation for unity. Hence the gravity of Fr Giussani's observation that the memory of Christ is lacking amongst us. For what happens when the memory of Christ is lacking? There is no unity any more. And what does this mean? Not that we cannot carry out the common actions, but there is something that comes between us: for example the defect of the other who is not what we expect. We experience that Christ is present because he enables us to relate to each other: first to ourselves, then to others, then to the whole of reality in a true way.

Without his presence without the event of His presence in the flesh relationship is not possible, any unity that is not based on some connivance is impossible (so when this connivance fails it's obvious that there was no unity).

He alone in his flesh present here and now through the charism we have been given, that is confirmed by the authority and constantly nourished by the sacraments, he alone enables us to live and to experience true unity in our life.

Cesana. Regarding the reduction of unity to a more or less ideological or mystical principle, Here is a statement by Longanosi I read yesterday concerning the men of principles: "You have to watch out when you lean on principles, because after a while they bend."

Question: "We were struck by Fr Giussani's example, when his mother said, 'How beautiful the world is and how great God is'. We'd

like to understand better what is meant by saying that the encounter becomes the form of every relationship, or, expressed in another way, that a presence shapes the way of looking at things."

Carron. This question is related to the previous one, because the example of Fr Giussani's mother says that it is someone in the flesh that introduces you to a true relationship with things. This is why Jesus came. I find hope when I think of the disciples, they were as rough as we are, and they would get up in the morning taken up by so many things. What saved them? A presence in the flesh: it was impossible to stay with Him, to see the things He was doing without opening up once again.

Fr Giussani's experience with his mother is just the same. Perhaps that morning he had got up a bit groggy, not completely aware of himself, but as he was going to Mass with his mother, there was someone who made him look at reality in its truth: "How beautiful the world is and how great God is!"

We all need a mother like this. Who has been this mother to us? For me, it has been the encounter with Fr Giussani, which is extended in our relationships.

This is very clear to me, had I not met Fr Giussani I would have been finished long ago. It was the relationship with him, the way he looked at me, the judgement that was there in those eyes that enabled me to relate with reality, and first of all with myself, in a different way. I'll be grateful to him forever for this, just as he is to his mother, because without him it is impossible, I would have been unable to look at myself truly. It is in the relationship with the charism given him that there is hope for all of us.

Without a presence in the flesh, that cannot be taken away from life, which cannot be removed from our eyes there is no true relationship with reality.

This is the point of reality where hope for our life is founded. For, what is hope? As Fr Giussani has taught us, hope is the desire for a hard-earned good. This desire is entirely based on the certainty of a Presence. Without this Presence, the "hard-earned" becomes either scepticism, or yielding to the inevitable, ephemeral aspect of things, to decay. In *L'attrattiva Gesù* he says. "It is a memory of something that has happened in which the hope that it will happen forever is founded and germinates."⁷⁷

It will go on happening forever. Do you remember the story of a girl of *Memoires Domini* in Washington, who related that one day, as she

was talking with Fr Giussani, she realised that at work she had the same mentality as all her colleagues? He told her, "That's not the problem. Don't worry about that, it's normal, because we are immersed in the world. What counts is that whenever someone tells you the truth, you must adhere at once, and there will always be someone in life who will tell you the good and the truth. What matters is to be able to adhere to it, to recognise it and adhere to it."⁷⁸

This is our hope: there will always be someone who tells us the truth, that is, there will always be He who will make himself present, as at the beginning, in an unforeseen and unforeseeable way, and the only question for us is to adhere.

Don't be afraid. It is He, who because of His resurrection possesses everything and is a Presence forever. So, the real issue in life is the road for reaching this certainty that He is, and that there is no power in the world that can remove Him from reality, that can take from us the opportunity to encounter Him every day. He is the one who is risen and is present in the flesh of our company, where all our hope stands. This is why we can go back home with this presence in our eyes, with this certainty, a greater certainty of his presence, confirmed once more.

He is present, he happens once more, let's go to meet him as beggars! For He is within reality, He is a presence we meet. This is why the ultimate question of life is faith; we are always faced with an election: the faith, the acknowledgement of a presence that is there, and this is the pivot of our experience.

Cesana. Since to these extraordinary Exercises of the Fraternity for the Jubilee year we have invited even people who are not enrolled in the Fraternity, perhaps, Pino, you had better present briefly both the Fraternity and the meaning of enrolment.

Fr Pino. The Fraternity was conceived of by Fr Giussani, as he once wrote to us, as a personal need for one's faith and for the realisation of one's Christian physiognomy.

By joining the Fraternity, a person acknowledges the encounter with the Movement of Communion and Liberation as the adequate definitive journey for his destiny, his happiness, and his holiness. For this reason it is a personal choice, a totally free and responsible adherence; it is not something one can entrust to a structure or an institution: the entire initiative in this matter - Fr Giussani always insists on this point - rests with the individual person. Once he said that enrolling in the Fraternity is the simplest and most radical gesture of prayer.

How do you go about it? It is very simple. You need to make an application for admission, which, once accepted by the President, Fr Giussani himself, allows you to join the Association. But, let me insist, it is a personal act, never to be entrusted to the responsables or to a group: it is an act of the person. In the same way, the invitation to contribute to the Common Fund, where - we are always reminded - the aim and the value do not lie so much in the causes, albeit important and beyond reproach, that the Common Fund supports; it is a call to sacrifice, to the awareness that our life is for God and for the Church.

Fr Giussani once said that the Common Fund is the easiest argument for our poverty of spirit. Everyone should feel free, each one should walk, giving what he can and as he can. No one must judge, it is only God who judges, but let's remember that this gesture educates us to be essential, it educates us to the consciousness that all that we are, all that we have, is for an Other, it is for the Lord.

CONCLUDING INTERVENTION OF FR. LUIGI GIUSSANI

I am speaking to you... it's the whole day, the whole of yesterday, and the day before, it's the whole of life that we have been talking, because what is contained in our first songs is really true, right from the contents of our first songs.

1. "I am not worthy of what You do for me. You who love someone like me so much."⁷⁹ It's a very bitter fact that God has made us grow in a charity and in a lively awareness of what man's life is. of what that movement is, of all the Church is, of what man's end is, what his destiny is - his destiny coincides with his end -, and we are so unworthy.

"I am not worthy of what You do for me." Think how, with every day that passes, I increase in myself the wonder at what God does! And God makes today because he has made yesterday! This is why it is a new reality in the world, which has entered the world; it is a new unity that has entered the world of the Church - and so we can also, or rather we must also add that a new reality within the Church increases, makes blossom more lovingly and more brilliantly what the Church is.

You see, "I am not worthy of what You do for me, I who have nothing to give to You." However, I tell You, "If you want, take me."

2. I was thinking over again these days all the huge amount of life and thought there has been among us. Because it's very significant that the first song that happened among us (I say "happened" because that's how it was) should already express the whole dimension of the question - in other words the reason - that moves us; and on the other hand has already given the answer.

Try to think of the hymn of our movement, of those words written by Maretta Campi, with the music of Adriana Mascagni: "If our voice is a voice that no longer has a reason then it's the poor voice of a man who doesn't exist."⁸⁰ But "it must cry out and implore that the breath of life may not end." The jolt that we spoke about, that they spoke about so well this morning, the great jolt of the desire for life, with emotion, with commitment, with the emotion of feeling, with the commitment of freedom, could also be felt as a need to bring about.

"The poor voice of a man who doesn't exist:" if this voice were not to have a reason, it would be deceitful and empty. Therefore if it must cry out and implore that the breath of life may not end, it must also "sing because there is life." This is the immense reason, that cannot be compared with any other word. "The whole of life asks for eternity." When we get up in the morning for a frenetic day, a tiresome day, or for a day free from particular engagements, "it must sing because there is life; the whole of life asks for eternity."

The whole of life asks for eternity. Try to think of forty years in which the whole of life has asked for eternity! "It cannot die, it cannot end, this voice of ours that asks love for life." This is why "it is not the poor voice of a man who doesn't exist: our voice sings with a reason."

As I was thinking these days of who composed this song, with its words and its music - they were two friends, 15 or 16 years old - I was asking myself, who these days is able to find such a synthetic and lively expression, capable of petition, that anyone can recognise as serious and sincere?

3. When Judas stopped staying with Jesus and went out to betray him, the Gospel says, *Erat autem* «ox⁸¹ it was night.

To forget, or to let go what we have been told, what we are told, would be to have our whole life fall into that darkness into which the life of the great majority of men seems destined to fall.

We go ahead in life through a certitude that burns away all that threatens us and all the fears for the strength we might lack.

Hope for us is a certainty, a certainty for the future. For someone who walks without certainty about where he has to get to, it would be like the tragedy of a poor man.

We let darkness overcome us too often, above all more than the desire for truth there is the delusion of a doubt.

"If a man has everything but has no forgiveness, tell me how he can hope."⁸² This is perhaps the most human and overpowering observation that there is.

"If a man has everything but has no forgiveness, how can he hope," if he does not recognise forgiveness which is the most dramatic and most convincing aspect of the relationship that the Mystery has with us. in such a way that he does not accept forgiveness as the supreme form of the relationship between himself and other men (the Our Father says: "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"). The man for whom what prevails is the sense of his own nothingness, the feeling of his discouragement, is dominated, though, and allows himself to be dominated, he becomes a slave of what the world says. And the world, sooner or later, manages to deny the certainty of human happiness.

Erat autem nox. it was night. The darkness into which the source of our hope and its power fall, is helped along by us. since that hope is not an answer that appears immediately living and realised. So we are like the awareness of a man when he is at the level of imposture. Thus all the advantage of our friendship, of our Fraternity, all the advantage of the Church in history is obscured, too.

All the negativity prevails when man is Judas, when he cannot avoid this identification with Judas, with the betrayer; but instead of crying out he should "implore that the destiny of life may not end."

Anyway, there would have been nothing in the world that could have really helped us. But as we "need someone to free us from evil," God has made himself, the Mystery has made himself tangibly present, flesh of our flesh.

To look at Jesus in the womb of his mother is the most liberating, the greatest thing we can imagine. Let's help each other to walk more and more in the light of this, so that the draining of our energy not obscure the truth of the light.

HOLY MASS

HOMILY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MGR GIULIANO FRIGENI
BISHOP OF PARINTINS

The image, the face, the look of Giussani demonstrate the truth of these words of Jesus. Our presence here, so numerous and so desirous to learn from him whom the Lord has given us as a genius to introduce us to the question "What is man?," and not only, he has introduced us also to the answer that the Lord has given us.

So there is no longer any limit to our vocation, to our fraternity. There is no longer any limit, even when our heart condemns us, as the second reading said. God's heart is greater, his mercy is greater, reaching even the point of speaking of Judas with affection, as we have heard, showing us an other way, the way of fidelity, the way of fraternity, the way of supplication, of prayer. But we learn, both from Giussani and from the Pope, to offer our life every day so that it become fruitful, become mission everywhere, like the thousand people who at Easter deep in the forest gathered in the same spot in order to understand what Easter is: and we understood a little more what is man and who is Christ. We here with all the comforts, they there with all the difficulties, we desire the same thing. The world needs what we have met and we have more and more need of gratitude, of prayer and of offering. Let's renew our profession of faith.

TELEGRAMS

His Holiness

John Paul II

Along with 26.000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and all the other friends of CL linked by satellite throughout the world for the spiritual exercises in the Jubilee year on "What is man and how can he come to know it" we are most thankful for your Holiness' hand-written message.

Your person is the terminal of the initiative of God who was made man through Mary's womb, and who, by the mysterious energy of the Spirit generated the Church, for the new life of the world.

In this Holy Year we ask Your Holiness with a paternal eye to entrust to Our Lady of the Rosary the whole of our Fraternity on the move that prays every day for the life of Your Holiness.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

His Eminence James Francis Stafford

President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity

26.000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and others linked in 50 countries in the world for the annual spiritual exercises in the year of the Great Jubilee on "What is man and how can he come to know it." grateful for your participation in the Eucharistic Celebration, the effective sign of Christian faithfulness and friendship, renew their commitment to the Church's mission in the world through the witness of a life changed by the encounter with the Mystery of Christ.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

His Excellency Mgr Stanislaw Rylko

Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity

26.000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and others linked in 50 countries in the world for the annual spiritual exercises in the year of the Great Jubilee on "What is man and how can he come to know it," wish to renew their thanks for your fatherly friendship. We ask Our Lady, with her motherly concern to help you always in the high mission entrusted to you in the Church of God for the care and education of the lay faithful. Look on us always as friends willing in all things to serve Peter.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*His Eminence Cardinal Camilla Ruini
President of the Italian Bishops' Conference*

26,000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and others linked in 50 countries in the world for the annual spiritual exercises in the year of the Great Jubilee on "What is man and how can he come to know it" confirm their commitment to Christian witness in Italian society for the good of their fellow men, deepening the charism received and faithful to the Church. May Our Lady support you in your efforts in the great task entrusted to you.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*Most Rev Ennio Antonelli
Secretary General
Italian Bishops' Conference*

26,000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and others linked in 50 countries in the world for the annual spiritual exercises in the year of the Great Jubilee on "What is man and how can he come to know it." grateful for your continual and renewed friendship, in renewing our readiness to serve the Church that is in Italy according to the Holy Father's intentions, we ask Our Lady's watchful care for your person and your heavy responsibility.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*His Eminence Christoph Schonhorn
Archbishop of Vienna*

26,000 members of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation present at Rimini and others linked in 50 countries in the world for the annual spiritual exercises in the year of the Great Jubilee on "What is man and how can he come to know it" thank you for your beautiful message and for your blessing, especially grateful to you for reminding us that Christ knows what is in man because he alone is the Redeemer of man.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*Most Rev. Angela Scola
Rector Magnificus of the Pontifical Lateran University*

Dearest Angelo, with your greetings for the Exercises you always teach us something of the gift we have received. Feeling you particularly close in this moment of the Movement's life in

the name of all the friends of the Fraternity spread throughout the world we assure you of a memento in the prayer of the Holy Rosary, that Our Lady may keep you company in your daily task for the growth of that new culture the cries out to the world the fulfilment of the ancient promise, a communion that embraces everything and everyone, for the human glory of Jesus in history.

Fr Luigi Giussani. Fr Stefano Alberto. Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*Most Rev Javier Martinez
Bishop of Cordoba*

We are the ones who should thank you for your paternity, blessed by the Church through assimilation of your person into the Apostolic Succession. In the name of all the friends of the Fraternity we ask you never to leave us without your precious contribution of heart and intelligence. so that we may live the Catholic faith with more awareness in a time in which the life of the Church in the world is under threat.

Fr Luigi Giussani, Fr Stefano Alberto, Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

*Most Rev. Filippo Santoro
Auxiliary Bishop of Rio de Janeiro*

In the name of all the friends of the Fraternity we are grateful for the witness of faith that you are giving to Latin America and therefore to everyone. Sure to have in you a friend and a father who accompanies us we share with you the hope in the historic method that the Spirit has aroused to have is walk towards holiness.

Fr Luigi Giussani. Fr Stefano Alberto. Prof. Giorgio Feliciani.

Appendix

ART IN OUR COMPANIONSHIP

By Sandro Chicrici

(A guide to the series of images selected from the History of art that accompanied the classical music during the entrance and exit)

The sequence of images traces a path that begins from the acknowledgement of God as creator of the cosmos and of man, and runs through the stages of the human experience of Christ, God made man, who is welcomed by the Virgin's maternal and also sponsal love, so as to become the model of the self-awareness of every man.

The Cosmos, God's Creation

1. *Christ Designs the World*, 12th cent, miniature, Vienna. Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2554, f. 1r
2. *The Hand of the Creator*, fresco, early 12th cent. From the apse of Sant Climent de Taull, Barcelona, Museu de Arte Catalana
3. *The Starlit Sky*, mosaic, 5th cent. Ravenna, vault of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.
4. Dome, Torres del Rio, Church of Santo Sepolcro, 13th cent.
5. *The Creation of the World*, tapestry, 12th cent. Gerona, Museo della Cattedrale.
6. *The Creation of the World* mosaic early 13th cent. Venice, San Marco, dome of the narthex.
7. *The Creation*, mosaic, detail. 13th cent. Florence, Baptistery of San Giovanni.

Man, God's Creature

8. *The Creation of Man*, mosaic, detail, 13th cent. Florence, Baptistery of San Giovanni.
9. *Cosmic Representation of Man*, miniature, ca. 1230. From the *Visions of St Hildegarde*. Lucca, Biblioteca Statale, ms. 1942, f. 9r
10. Wiligclmo, *Creation of Adam and Ere*, sculptured slab. Cathedral of Modena, facade.

God becomes Man, Mary's "Yes"

11. Beato Angelico, *Annunciation*. Cortona, diocesan Museum.
12. Giotto, *Annunciation*. Padua, Arena Chapel.

13. Simone Martini, *Annunciation*. Florence, Uffizi.
14. Beato Angelico, *Annunciation*. Florence, Museum of San Marco.
15. Leonardo da Vinci, *Annunciation*. Florence, Uffizi.
16. Dello Delli, *Joseph's dream*, detail. Salamanca, the old Cathedral.
17. Antonello da Messina, *The Virgin of the Annunciation*. Palermo, Galleria Nazionale.

Christ, God's Companionship to Man

18. Giotto, *Visitation*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
19. Giotto, *Visitation*. Padua, Arena Chapel.
20. *Nativity*, miniature, circa 1320. From *Apocalypse*, ms. 68174, f. iv. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
21. Giotto, *Nativity*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
22. Giotto, *Nativity*. Padua, Arena Chapel.
23. Giotto, *Adoration of the Magi*. Padua, Arena Chapel.

Mary, Mother of the Christ-Child

24. Giotto, *The Flight into Egypt*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
25. Beato Angelico *The Flight into Egypt*, Florence, Museum of San Marco.
26. Giotto, *The Presentation in the Temple*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
27. Beato Angelico, *The Presentation in the Temple* Florence, Museum of San Marco.
28. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Maestri*. Massa Marittima, Palazzo Civico.
29. Beato Angelico, *Madonna of the Star*. Florence, Museum of San Marco.
30. Beato Angelico, *Triptych of Saint Peter the Martyr*, detail. Florence, Museum of San Marco.

Mary-Church, Spouse of Christ

31. Maestro di Cesi, *La Stella Altarpiece*, detail. Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Musée Ile-de-France.
32. *Assumption of the Virgin with Christ*, miniature. Stammheimer Missal, ca. 1260, f. 145v. Santa Monica, J. Paul Getty Museum.
33. *Assumption of the Virgin*, miniature. Rathmann Missal, 1159, f. 186v. Hildesheim, Domschatz.

The Face of Christ

34. *The Face of Christ*, fresco, early 12th cent. From the apse of Sant Climent de Taull. Barcelona, Museu de Arte Catalana.

35. *Sinopia of the Creator*. Assisi, Upper Basilica.
36. *Christ Pantocrator*, icon. Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai.
37. *Christ and the Heavenly Jerusalem*, fresco. Civate, San Pietro al monte.
38. *Last Supper*, detail, early 13th cent. Modena, Choir screen of the Cathedral.
39. *Christ Blessing*, fresco, 14th cent. Abbey of Viboldone (Milan).
40. Beato Angelico, *Transfiguration*. Florence, Museum of San Marco.
41. Antonello da Messina, *Salvator Mundi*. London, National Gallery.
42. Ultramontane master (?), *Resurrection*, fresco. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
43. Piero della Francesca, *Resurrection*. Sansepolcro, Museo comunale.

Christ's Face, the Face of Man

44. *Christ and the Disciples of Emmaus*, carved stone. Santo Domingo de Silos, cloister.
45. Giotto, *The Wedding at Cana*. Padua, Arena Chapel.
46. Giotto, *The Resurrection of Lazarus*. Padua, Arena Chapel.
47. Giotto, *The Entrance into Jerusalem*. Padua, Arena Chapel.
48. Ultramontane master (?), *Last Supper*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.
49. Ultramontane master (?), *The Washing of the Feet*. Assisi, Lower Basilica.

The Face of Man, Icon of the Face of Christ

50. Beato Angelico, *St Laurence Giving Alms*, detail. Vatican, Niccolina Chapel.
51. Masaccio, *Distribution of Goods*, detail. Florence, Brancacci Chapel.
52. Masaccio, *The Tribute*, detail. Florence, Brancacci Chapel.
53. Masaccio, *St Peter Healing the Sick*, detail. Florence, Brancacci Chapel.
54. Masaccio and Filippino Lippi, *The Resurrection of Theophilus*, detail. Florence, Brancacci Chapel.

DIRECTORY FOR FRATERNITY GROUPS

The following indications, which have emerged from the last twelve years' experience, aim to reply to Fraternity groups who have expressed the desire for a greater seriousness in the way they lead their lives, both personal and in communion.

1. Obedience to the indications given by the person guiding the whole Fraternity

Those who participate in the life of the Fraternity are invited to obey the indications given by the person guiding the whole Fraternity, in a responsible immanency in the life of the Movement that goes as far as one's affectivity.

2. Nature and consistency of the group

A group is made up of adults who freely choose it or constitute it. The idea guiding the Fraternity is the discovery that an adult is just as responsible for his work and family as he is for his sanctity, for his life as a path to sanctity, that is to say, for his life as vocation.

The adult, in so far as he is responsible, joins up with others who recognize the same responsibility before life as vocation.

According to the method the Movement teaches, everyone should desire a Fraternity group, even though adherence to it is personal.

3. Guidance: each group must be guided

Each group must be guided. The person guiding the group is not necessarily the prior, but must be someone authoritative, in the evangelical sense of the term: someone who has faith, who can even be from outside the group. The person guiding must communicate a method of life: he must teach how to bring everything back to one fundamental idea, and by meditating upon it, watching it, loving it, "all the rest" may spring forth. This is the origin of our method: Christian life springs from the encounter with a presence, and by following this presence one is changed. It is precisely in this change of self that the idea of a rule slowly matures.

The person guiding must encourage an authentic seriousness in the faith. He should be one who gives the group a direction, comforts it, and helps it to correct the inevitable tendency toward artificiality and moralism.

A stable relationship with someone "external" to the group (a priest, a responsible of the Movement, a member of *Memores Domini*) is a way to avoid emphasizing one's own group to the detriment of the unity of the entire Fraternity, which is not a federation of autonomous entities.

Each group must have a prior, who performs a secretarial function (notices, document distribution, etc.) and maintains order. The prior follows the directives received from the Center through the diocesan and regional responsables as well as the member of the executive committee in charge of the region.

4. The rule

In the life of the group, the rule is in function of an increase of the relationship between the person and Christ, and thus as a consequence, of an increase of the Movement in service to the Church.

a) Prayer

Each group must give itself a rule of prayer: it may be reciting a Hail Mary in the evening or going to daily Mass. Whether one chooses the minimum or maximum hypothesis is not important. What is important is the gesture of prayer, and the faithfulness to it.

b) Poverty

Monthly support of the common fund of the entire Fraternity, which implies sacrifice, is in function of an increase in the consciousness of poverty as an evangelical virtue. As St. Paul says: "We have nothing yet we possess everything." The true way to possess everything is to be detached from everything. One can pledge even a few coins, but to pay them with faithfulness has a fundamental value as a reminder, because it is both a concrete and unitary gesture. Whoever does not commit himself to this directive may not be considered part of the Fraternity.

c) Development of the knowledge of Church doctrine

The Movement's catechetical study is the School of Community: this illuminates our formation, which is our whole life's task. It should be carried out while taking into account the Exercises and the latest documents of the Movement which clarify the context in which the "course" set by the School of Community is placed.

In cases where the School of Community is done elsewhere (as the result of a missionary presence of adults in their environment), the Fraternity group should meditate on the spiritual Exercises or documents indicated by the Movement, without failing nevertheless to refer back to the School of Community.

5. Work

The work of the Fraternity is the increase of the Movement in service to the Church. Taking on specific commitments is therefore in function of this (see the letter to new enrollees to the Fraternity).

Notes

- ¹ Cf. John Paul II. Encyclical letter *Redemptor Hominis*. 4 March 1979.
- ² *Lk* 1:68.
- ³ Cf. L. Giussani. *In Search of the Human Face*, (unpublished translation 1983).
- ⁴ Cf. *Ps* 18 (17):2-3.
- ⁵ *Rom* 4:18.
- ⁶ Cf. L. Giussani. *The Witness of someone who has chosen to offer his life to the Lord* in *L'Osservatore Romano*. 19 May 2000. p. 4.
- ⁷ Cf. P. Claudel. *The Announcement made to Mary*.
- ⁸ Cf. *Mt A.lk* 6:37; 1 *Cor* 4:3-4.
- ⁹ John Paul II. *Homily, Pilgrimage to Korcia*. 23 March 1980.
- ¹⁰ *Ps* 118(117):23; *Mr* 21: 42; *Mk* 12: II.
- ¹¹ Cf. *Exercises of the Fraternity*. Coop. Edit. Nuovo Mondo. Milan 1997.
- Cf. *Exercises of the Fraternity*. Coop. Edit. Nuovo Mondo. Milan 1998.
- ¹³ Cf. *Exercises of the Fraternity*. Coop. Edit. Nuovo Mondo. Milan 1999.
- ¹⁴ *The things that I see*. in the CD *Bay Ridge Band - Spirituals and Songs from the Stoop*, Euro Company, New York 1999.
- ¹⁵ *Ps* 8:5.
- ¹⁶ *Ps* 8:3.
- ¹⁷ L. Giussani, *L'io, il potere, le opere*. Marietti, Genoa 2000, p. 65.
- ¹⁸ G. Leopardi, *Zihaldone di Pensieri*, Mondadori. Milan 1994. pp. 851-852.
- ¹⁹ G. Leopardi, *Canto notturno di un pastore errante dell'Asia*, in *Cara heltd....* BUR, Milan 1996, p. 69.
- ²⁰ Cf. *Jn* 13:3.
- ²¹ H. Arendt, *Tra passato e futuro*. Gar/anti, Milan 1999. p. 227.
- ²² H. Daniel-Rops. *The Fiery Sword*.
- ²³ N. Bobbio, *Perche non riesco a credere*, in *La Repubblica*. 30 April 2000. p. 1.
- ²⁴ St. Augustine. *Comment on the Gospel of St John*. 26. 5.
- ²⁵ Cf. L. Giussani. *L'io, il potere, le opere*. op. cit.. pp. 9-95.
- ²⁶ P.P. Pasolini, *Lettere luterane*. Einaudi. Torino 1982, p. 63.
- ²⁷ C. Pavese, *Diario*. Einaudi, Turin 1964. p. 64.
- ²⁸ A. Einkielkraut. *Lost Humanity*.
- ²⁹ H. Schlier, *Reflections on the New Testament*.
- ³⁰ J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, London. George Allen and Unwin Ltd 1930. p. 295.
- ³¹ G.F. Rusconi, *Ixucita: come se Dio non ci fosse*. in *La Stampa*. 25 April 2000, p. 19.
- ³² P. Flores d'Arcais, *Dio esiste?*. in *MicroMega*. February 2000. p. 40.
- ³³ Saturninus Sallustius Secundus. *De diis et mundo*, 2. 1.
- ³⁴ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *IM parabola dell'definite e dei ciechi*, in *IM Stampa*, 4 December 1999. pp. 22-23.
- ³⁵ Cf. G. Pascoli. *Il cieco*. in *Poesie*. Gar/anti. Milan 1994, pp. 335 ff.
- ³⁶ Cf. J. Ratzinger. *IM parabola dell'elefante e dei ciechi*. op. cit.. p. 23.
- ³⁷ Cf. *Prima che sorga hatha*, in *Canti*. Coop. Edit. Nuovo Mondo, Milan 1996. p. 150.
- ³⁸ Cf. L. Giussani. *The Religious Sense*, op. cit.. p. 108.
- « 1 *Tim* 4:4.
- ⁴⁰ G. Pascoli. *Il cieco*. op. cit.. p. 336.

- ⁴¹ E. Montale, *L'agave sullo seoglio - Maestrale*. from *Ossi di Seppia*. in *Time le poesie*. Oscar Mondadori, Milan 1990. p. 73.
- ⁴² Cf. L. Giussani, *The Religious Sense*, op. cit., p. 106.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ N. Bobbio, *Perche non riesco a credere*, op. cit., p. I.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. *Dt* 32:16; *Is* 63:16; 64:7; *Mt* 6:9; *1 Cor* 6:18.
- ⁴⁶ *Ps* 8:5.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. Novalis, *Canti spirituali*, 6. vv. 1-4: 12, vv. 1-2. in *hmi alia notte. Canti spirituali*. Guanda, Milan 1979. pp. 77 and 99.
- ⁴⁸ St. Augustine, *Confessions*.
- ⁴⁹ T.S. Eliot, *Choruses from "The Rock,"* in *Collected poems 1909-1935*, London, Faber and Faber 1936, pp 170-171.
- ⁷⁰ Cf. *Gen* 17: 6-8.
- ⁵¹ Cf. *Gen* 32:29.
- ⁵² Cf. *Gen* 33:14-15.
- ⁵³ Cf. *Ps* 132 (131):5.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. *Is* 7:10-14.
- ⁵⁵ T.S. Eliot, *Choruses from "The Rock,"* op. cit., p 172.
- ⁵⁶ Ch. Peguy, *Nota congiunta su Cartesio*, in *Lui e qui*. BUR, Milano 1997, p. 491.
- ⁵⁷ Cf. St. Bernard, of Clairvaux *Sermons for the feasts of Our Lady*.
- ⁵⁸ L. Giussani, *The sign of signs*, in *Traces*, May 1998, p. II.
- ⁵⁹ Efrem the Syrian, *The harp of the spirit*.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.
- ⁶¹ Cf. Basil the Great, *Homilia in sanctam Christi generationem*. 2-3. PG 31, 1461 b-1464.
- ⁶² Cf. P.* 76 (75): 10.
L. Giussani, *The sign of signs*, op. cit., p. II.
- ⁶⁴ L. Giussani, *L'attrattiva Gesu*. BUR. Milan 1999, pp. 16-17.
- ⁶⁵ Cf. *Easter Poster 2000* of Communion and Liberation.
L. Giussani, *That great power of the Pope on his knees*, in *Traces*, April 2000.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.
L. Giussani, *Simon do you love me?*, in *Thirty days*. February 1995.
- ⁶⁹ F. Giussani, *Unity, law of knowledge*, in *Traces*, April 2000.
- ⁷⁰ L. Giussani, *The Touch of the Mystery*, in *Traces*, May 2000. p. 9.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷² A. Negri, *Atto d'amore*, in *Mia Giovinezza*, BUR, Milan 1995, p. 70.
- ⁷¹ L. Giussani, *Unity, law of knowledge*, op. cit., p. 5.
- ⁷⁴ Cf. L. Giussani, *The Religious Sense*, op. cit., pp. 100.
- ⁷⁵ L. Giussani, *L'attrattiva Gesu*, op. cit., pp. 14-15.
- ⁷⁶ Cf. Ch Peguy, *Il Mistero delta carita di Giovanna d'Arco*, in *I Misteri*, Jaca Book. Milan 1986, p. 56.
- ⁷⁷ L. Giussani, *L'attrattiva Gesu*, op. cit., pp. 17
- ⁷⁸ T. Landi, *Whom do you live for?*, in *Traces*. September 1999. p. 56.
- ⁷⁹ C. Chieffo, *lo non sono degno*. in *Canti*. Coop. Edit. Nuovo Mondo, Milan 1996, pp. 176-177.
- ⁸¹ M. Campi. A. Mascagni, *Povera voce*, in *Canti*. op. cit., p. 189.
- ⁸¹ *Jn* 13:30.
- ⁸² C. Chieffo, *Ballata del potere*. in *Canti*, op.cit., pp. 195-196.

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