

## On Earth as in Heaven

*And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself. (Jn 12:32)*

Christian life is a mystery of attraction. Consecrated life is a mystery of attraction with a disconcerting intensity. Christ drew us into his Paschal Mystery. He drew us into his dying of love for the Father for the salvation of the world and in doing so, he draws us into his eternal glory.

### Lives That Speak of Heaven

And why this disconcerting attraction towards persons of consecrated life? For what purpose? Is it not to make manifest, visible and tangible the gift that He wants to give to all humans in this life and, even more, beyond this life?

Who is it that will give to the world—and even to the Church—hope? Not just the hope for better times down here, but the hope of eternity, the joy of knowing we are all desired by God for an eternity of happiness in the bosom of the Father? Who will speak that hope? Not just through words but through lives? Lives that speak of Heaven. Lives that give a taste of Heaven. Lives that rehabilitate human beings, remind them of their dignity. And what infinite dignity for us to know that we are all invited for an eternity of fellowship, for an eternal immersion in the joy of the Three?

### From All Nations, Tribes, Peoples and Languages

"After that I saw that there was a huge number, impossible for anyone to count" (Rev 7:9). And what immediately strikes the viewer who was given a glimpse of Heaven? This huge crowd that comes "from every nation, race, tribe, and language" (Ibid.). No nation, no tribe, no people, no language are excluded from this heavenly assembly.

Showing a glimpse of heaven here on earth cannot be done without going beyond boundaries! There is a taste of Heaven in the reconciled diversity of nations, tribes, peoples, languages and above all in reconciled sexual diversity.

So, if the Lord draws us so intensely towards Him, there is no doubt that He prepares our heart, that He purifies it and expands it to experience in a special way this diversity reconciled in Love!

Drawing us into his death of Love, Jesus makes us able to die to ourselves, to die to sin, to die to all the fears that make us afraid of the encounter with the other.

### Interculturality Is First and Foremost a Pentecost

Consecrated celibacy is not consecrated isolation! It is an opening, an injury of the heart, a channel which opens to the other, without being exclusive. It is going so far as to preferring each "other" that the Lord puts on our paths.

Interculturality is certainly the fruit of a wisdom, of an art, of an asceticism... But it is also and even primarily a Pentecost. The disciples that start speaking the languages of all the nations present in Jerusalem are not simply brilliant polyglots. They are men and women with hearts transformed, seized by the paschal mystery of Jesus. They have left behind

their fears, their fortresses, their sterile laws to go out to meet the other in a continual visitation that gives rise to an all-new communion.

#### Seeing the Other as a Gospel

Interculturality are those faces that light up because we let ourselves be illuminated by the Paschal Mystery. "Who are these people, dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?" And one of the elders replied, "these are the people who have been through the great trial; they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14)

Consecrated life lived seriously has its share of trial. It asks a lot of us. It asks everything of us. To the point that our strengths alone are unable to answer the loving call that the Lord ceaselessly sends us to go further in love. So we let ourselves be washed and sanctified by the blood of the Lamb. We gradually let ourselves take on His chastity, His poverty, His obedience and His joy. And it is this all-new poverty that makes us look at the other as a gospel that we want so much to know.

#### A Mystique of Reconciled Diversity

Yes, there is a mystique of gender and cultural diversity, a mystique of reconciled diversity that is the fruit, the "abundant harvest" sprung from the grain of wheat thrown into the earth; it is of Jesus who died and rose to reweave us in Love. Is it not this new weaving, this other way of living together that will give our world a taste of Heaven?

For Reflecting and Praying Together:  
How to learn to look at the other as a gospel?

How will our life give the world a taste of Heaven?

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