

Angelus – St. Peter's Square, January 29, 2006

The Church's Entire History is a History of Holiness



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Encyclical *God is Love*, by referring to the primacy of charity in the life of Christians and of the Church, I wanted to recall that the privileged witnesses of this primacy are the Saints, who made their lives a hymn to God-Love despite their thousands of different tones. We celebrate them every day of the year in the liturgy.

I am thinking, for example, of those whom we are commemorating in these days: the Apostle Paul with his disciples Timothy and Titus, St Angela Merici, St Thomas Aquinas, St John Bosco. These saints are very different: the first belong to the beginnings of the Church and were missionaries of the first evangelization; in the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas is the model of a Catholic theologian who found in Christ the supreme synthesis of truth and love; in the Renaissance, Angela Merici presented a path of holiness also to those who were living in a secular environment; in the modern epoch, Don Bosco, inflamed with love for Jesus the Good Shepherd, cared for the most underprivileged children and became their father and teacher.

In truth, the Church's entire history is a history of holiness, animated by the one Love whose source is God. Indeed, only supernatural love, like the love that flows ever new from Christ's heart, can explain the miraculous flourishing down the centuries of Orders, male and female religious Institutes and other forms of consecrated life.

In the Encyclical, I cited among the Saints most famous for their charity John of God, Camillus of Lellis, Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac, Giuseppe Cottolengo, Luigi Orione and Teresa of Calcutta (cf. n. 40).

This array of men and women, moulded by the Spirit of Christ who made them models of dedication to the Gospel, leads us to consider the importance of consecrated life as an expression and school of love. The Second Vatican Council emphasized that the imitation of Christ in chastity, poverty and obedience should be entirely oriented to the achievement of perfect charity (cf. *Perfectae Caritas*, n. 1). Precisely in order to shed light on the importance and value of consecrated life, the Church celebrates this coming 2 February, Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, as the Day of Consecrated Life. In the afternoon of that day, just as John Paul II liked to do, I will preside at Holy Mass in the Vatican Basilica, to which the consecrated men and women who live in Rome are specially invited. Let us together thank God for the gift of consecrated life and pray that it may continue to be an eloquent sign of his merciful love in the world.

Let us now turn to Mary Most Holy, mirror of love. With her motherly help may Christians and especially consecrated persons walk expeditiously and joyfully on the path of holiness.

I cordially greet the French-speaking pilgrims present for the Angelus prayer. Following the invitation of Christ in today's Gospel, may each one, in silence, welcome the Good News, meditate it in his heart and draw nourishment from it. Thus, the faithful will learn to love and serve, conforming their lives to the Savior's.

As I greet the Polish pilgrims, I think of the tragic accident last evening in Katowice in which many people died. I entrust them to the mercy of God, uniting myself in spirit to their families and to those who were injured in the accident. I give to all a most cordial Blessing.

I greet the Italian-speaking pilgrims, in particular the Schola Cantorum "Santa Maria Assunta" from Gerano. I then greet with great affection the children of Rome's Catholic Action gathered today in St Peter's Square at the end of the "Month of Peace". With their representatives who are here beside me we are about to release two doves, the symbol of peace. Dear children! I know that you have decided to "train in peace", guided by the great "Trainer" who is Jesus. I therefore entrust to you members of the Children's Catholic Action the task I proposed to everyone in the Message for 1 January: learn to speak and do the truth always, and in this way you will become peacemakers.

Now, freedom for these two doves.... This dove wants to stay with the Pope, as we can see, but it will find its freedom. A good Sunday to you all. Let us go in peace.

Today, we are celebrating the World Day for Those Afflicted by Leprosy that Raoul Follereau established more than 50 years ago and that the associations inspired by his humanitarian work have continued to celebrate. I would like to address a special greeting to all who are suffering from this disease and I encourage the missionaries, health-care workers and volunteers who are serving humanity on this front. Leprosy is a symptom of an even greater and more widespread illness: misery. For this reason, following in the footsteps of my Predecessors, I renew the appeal to the Heads of Nations so that they join their efforts to overcome the grave imbalances that continue to penalize a large part of humanity.

His Holiness Benedict XVI

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, no. 5, 31 January 2006, pp. 1-2, Fr. ed.)

"Little Elements of Unity While Waiting for the Great Unity"

On this Sunday dedicated to Christian Unity, I draw inspiration from what Father Maurice Péroquin writes concerning the mystery, "the crowning of Mary in heaven".

"God crowns His Mother amid the hymns of jubilation of the entire heavenly court. He through whom everything was created and recreated, He who is eternal and was born of Mary, crowns the Immaculate, the one whom the angel greeted as being 'full of grace'."

"United to all the saints in heaven, the Church expresses its thanks to the Mother of God who is also the Mother of humanity, but the Church also implores her so that unity may come to exist between all her children. May the Church, through the Virgin Queen, experience a renewal in the unity of peoples."

"O Mary, be our refuge and our advocate, leading us all to heaven."

What a delight from heaven was the issue no. 176 of *Le Royaume* in which Heaven's acts of thoughtfulness are multiplied. What a special unity there is in the pages added for

the benefit of our souls! As we read those pages, burning with exhaustion or burnout and burning with love, we are enkindled with wonder, a celestial sense of wonder that gives more beauty to our day-to-day living. For us who taste every little bit given us by Heaven, we become always increasingly aware that we are seeing celestial events take place very close to us.

The Work is sharply attacked, but we have our defenders. The Marian victory is assured because on May 13, 1917, at Fatima, Mary said to Lucia, Francesco and Jacinta: *"In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph."*

But that is not all; there are also our dear departed members who, like a sequence of rosaries, bring to mind each set of mysteries.

Raoul Auclair presents the joyful mysteries to us, the joy of the Work of the Lady of All Peoples which he discov-

ered through Ida Peerdeman, and he caught a glimpse of its fulfillment in Quebec through *Life of Love*. He had a spirit of poverty, leaving behind all his possessions and his country, France, to come and settle in Quebec and end his life as a Brother in the Community of the Sons of Mary.

The sorrowful mysteries with Father Philippe Roy: he was sick physically when the Blessed Virgin brought him into the Work. His greatest sorrow was Cardinal Vachon's decree of May 4, 1987. He loved souls in a special way. *There were so many conversions!* We are reminded of this in a chapter of the posthumous book written on his life. And what of the very numerous catechism classes he prepared for souls.

Father Lionel Mélançon could represent the glorious mysteries through his knowledge of Holy Scripture and the little booklet *Life of Love: I*



Fr. Lionel Mélançon

Read, I Believed! which described well his faith in the Work.

Father Jean-Claude Guillemette lived the mysteries of light immediately after his death. A few times, our Mother saw his soul in adoration before the altar during the celebration of Holy Mass. He transmitted to us his love of the Eucharist.

That is the "Magnificat" we must sing today on this Sunday dedicated to Christian Unity. The unity within the Work offers us the consolation that we want to see also radiate about us. According to our small capacity, we are living as little elements of unity while waiting for the great Unity resulting from the dogma of the Lady of All Peoples.

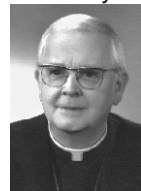
Christianity



Fr. J.-Claude Guillemette



Raoul Auclair



Fr. Philippe Roy

Christiane Leblanc