

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

Philanthropic and humanitarian paper
for moral and social uplift. Published monthly

Administration and editing
27, Route de Vallière
1236 CARTIGNY / Geneva
Switzerland Tel. 022 756 12 08

Subscriptions
Switzerland, 1 year . Fr. 5.00
Other countries . . US\$ 7.00
IBAN: CH83 0900 0000 1200 0656 7

Founder: F.L.A. Freytag

The deepest of sciences: the science of real love

MANKIND do not know what real love is. They are only acquainted with spurious love. To them, this spurious love is quite familiar, whereas divine love is unknown to them, in spite of the fact that there are many religions in their midst, all of which talk a lot about love. Love cannot be expressed in words: it is a fluid which can be felt and procures a deep feeling of happiness. All the kind, affectionate and loving words that may be uttered leave a true impression only if they are accompanied with the influence of love and of attachment that issue from the heart and bring forth the words of life. Without that aura, the words are lifeless and want for warmth.

Men are generally quite indifferent about each other. The friendly words they exchange, lack power, because the things their lips express are frequently not the expression of their hearts. They are selfish and consequently incapable of expressing true affection. They only feel diabolical love, which is egoistical and self-centred. They love their children because they are theirs, but cannot love other people's children as much as their own, because they confine themselves to the narrow circle of their small clannish family.

A very different spirit prevails in the divine family: all members are children of God, who are highly honoured and dearly loved. The Almighty loves all his children. Those who feel covered in this way by the love of their Father in Heaven, are subject to neither fear nor sadness, because divine love nourishes them day by day.

Hence, love is a fluid, an inexpressible influence, absolutely indispensable to us. When someone loves us, is attached to us, we can feel it. We can also feel the worth and the intensity of the affection shown to us. If that affection is profound and true, our hearts are confident. Hence, even if every outward appearance and every circumstance that arose, seemed to prove the contrary, we should still feel the warm affection of our friend, that profound attachment which is able to bridge all gaps that may open up, the love that never tires, that never cools and that stands faithful and unshakable. As the Apostle Paul states, love is patient, all kindness, does not sour and always preserves its sweetness.

True love grants full freedom. It is impossible to imagine divine love without that association of sentiments. When human beings love with devilish love, it is, on the contrary, an absolute torment. In some cases, it is impossible to cast a glance of affection at another, or

to give a smile of friendship, without incurring violent reproaches from whoever it may be who loves one with that terrible and dangerous love. It gives one the impression of a tiger bounding out of its cage for the least thing that exasperates it.

Such is the devilish love with which human beings are affected and which gives them so much pain. With that love, there is no freedom. Moreover, there are all sorts of offshoots, which are suspicion, jealousy, doubt and so many sentiments which are a power of destruction. Therefore, devilish love leads to death, whereas divine love leads to life. There is the same difference between religiousness and the divine mentality. That is why we need to do our best to drive out the religiousness that still remains in our hearts, so that we may not be Pharisees who study the divine Word, but fail to study their own hearts.

We are able to receive the divine impressions only when we love our neighbour. In the Bible, the Truth is scattered around in various parts. That was why keen sight was required to set everything in its place, to mark everything, and to emphasize the harmonious thought, of all wisdom, which presided over bringing all the wonderful divine creations into existence. If there is such a large number of religions, it is because people cling to certain Bible passages and make a doctrine out of them. Some get baptized three times in succession, and others keep the Sabbath. They are quite right to do these things if they lead them to love their neighbour and to sweeten their dispositions, but if they remain selfish, those things are of no use to them. Rightly does the Prophet Isaiah say: "Your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that He does not hear. For your hands are stained with blood." The object of God's Work is to reform us. If this result is not obtained, it is all in vain.

I have always been in favour of practical things. I have never been satisfied with theory. I have also learnt a lot from our dear Saviour. He never talked to his disciples a great deal about the Bible. He did not firstly send them to a theological school when he met them on the shore of the Lake of Gennesaret. He said: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

It is certain that human beings are not immediately prepared to allow themselves to be made happy. Not being aware of what real happiness is, they do not even want it. They do look for happiness, but in the wrong

direction, and the Adversary binds them with powerful chains, without them realizing it. These chains are their lawless habits. One terrible chain is that of sexual habits, which have nothing at all to do with love.

Real love is all dignity, respect, esteem and great consideration. It never sours and, in all circumstances, always remains dignified, noble and amiable, and very humble and kind. If one, in a position that places him in the limelight, sets himself beneath the rest to be able to uplift them, and serves them agreeably and kindly, such an attitude is highly pleasing to the Lord, because it shows real love, great grace and goodness. Such a person, fully aware of what he would have a right to expect in the world, owing to his exalted position, but who takes the Master's teachings to heart, joyfully renouncing self for the purpose of rallying to the divine programme, which is that we should serve our fellows with selfless love, in this way, acquires true worth.

Our dear Saviour demonstrated the glory of God, in his abasement. He washed his beloved disciples' feet. He even washed Judas's feet, knowing that this disciple was already fostering evil thoughts in his mind. Our Lord always remained the same. Never did he change. He was always wonderful in his benevolence and affection, always disposed to lay down his life for others. To us, he is an admirable Pattern. He is the sublime Demonstration of true love.

The Lord Jesus has set us a wonderful example with his kind and worthy way of doing things, all goodness and mercy. We are deeply moved when we can feel his very great tenderness. It is he who makes the Father known to us and so imparts to us full confidence in the love of God, constantly displayed on our behalf, offering us his communion.

Of course, a given line of conduct is required to bring us into contact with the Almighty and to enable us to feel his influence of blessing in our hearts. Human beings generally have a great many habits that lead them away from that influence. That is why they are unable to feel the immense grace of being in communion with the Almighty, of feeling his protection, of being able to lean on Him, of asking Him for things, and of being answered with great kindness and affection.

To be sure, we have to ask the Lord for things that correspond with what we need for doing his Work on Earth, and not to ask for selfish things. Our dear Saviour said: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." This last, the Lord Himself undertakes to see to.

It was by following that advice that, little by little, I was able to receive light from the Lord. First, I received

"It took all that"

ANAIC — a little girl from Brittany, in north-west France — that morning would willingly have gone on lying in the pleasant warmth of her bed. The shades of night were still hanging over the countryside, and the rain, which had started the day before, was still drumming on the roof. A familiar noise from the stables had reached her ears, and the little girl realized it was getting-up time and that a new day had started for her. Her father was already busy with the animals, and the child courageously threw off the bedclothes, although it would have been so nice to turn her face to the wall again and go to sleep till a ray of light would come to drive away the cold darkness.

The water which was welling up from the basement was invading her room, and Anaic's wooden shoes, afloat, were drifting across this miniature lake. These last few days, during

which the sky had been pouring down sheets of water as if it was never going to stop, the little girl was staying at home, for school was 8 kilometres away.

It was a poor little house without running water, and the water had to be fetched from a spring about a kilometre away, and the evening before, Anaic had had to set out, as twilight was falling, on a narrow strip of land, across which the storms coming from the ocean would sweep. She would go, in spite of the terrors that assailed her. Near the spring, under the ceiling of clouds, the tall trees seemed to be the haunt of all the goblins and evil spirits that ever were. The stories her father would tell her lived again in this spot amidst the dismal whistling of the wind and the cracking of the high branches. In spite of the cold mist and the feeling of oppression, you had to go as far as the hollow in which the water came up from the depths of the earth, and there to fill the two large buckets.

After that, Anaic had to return with difficulty up the rising path, lugging the two pails which were too heavy for her.

Well, that was how things were, and her parents' affection made it easier, but all of them were harassed with work. Poverty prevailed whatever they did, and in the melting pot of want, there was nothing to ease their lot. Anaic would often wonder why there was such harshness and why so much adversity in association with the cruelty of man, for it seemed it was sufficient to be like her — the poorest of the poor and also very fat, deformed and short-sighted — to be the butt for the ribaldry and the scorn of her kind. Nothing, it appeared, was to be spared her. Nevertheless, in the justice of nature, she had received some compensation. In the first place, Anaic ignored unkindness. Of all the wicked things that had been done to her, not one had left its mark on her, so that she knew nothing about resentment. Secondly, she learnt things

easily, so that at school, she was always top of her class.

On dull days when the barometer would waver from rain to wind and then to storm, Anaic had to stay home, for there was a shortness of clothes and of shoes. Those days were joyful days for the little girl: the wind might blow, and the rain might batter the roof for all it was worth, but close up to the skylight, she would, with great eagerness, consult the big Bible which she had rescued out of the dust of the lumber room. The hours would pass unnoticed, for with her reading, Anaic lived in the years of the first century when Jesus of Nazareth delivered his wonderful testimony to the world of his time. It seemed, to her, she was living among the people around the Son of God, who was obeyed by the wind and the sea, and who, just as he pleased, caused fear, adversity and even death to recede.

Mother's voice would drag the child away from the charm of the Gospel, and back to

a small ray of light of divine love. And gradually as I carried out the teachings received, the light increased, the equivalent took the shape of greater brightness. The more efforts I made, the brighter it became, the more dazzling. At last, there is now the full light. That is how we are taken out of darkness into the divine light. To leave darkness behind is to lay aside self-love; to get into the light is to come to love one's neighbour. So, the question for us is to leave darkness behind and to head for the light.

As I said earlier, our dear Saviour exercised love most radiantly. When his disciples showed themselves disrespectful and ill-bred towards him, taking the liberty of passing untoward remarks, he displayed infinite mercy and affection. Had they had to do with an ordinary master, the disciples would never have dared to behave as they did. However, the Master was so simple, so good, so affectionate and so approachable, that they took liberties. They even went so far as to be insolent, which was the result of their love, still very selfish.

How frequently we also behave insolently in the presence of the Lord! Nevertheless, He does not say anything. He does not scold us. But, of course, the seed we sow always leads to a harvest in kind. Judas reaped a terrible harvest from the bad seed he had sown. Peter also had a bitter lesson to learn, and so also did all the other disciples. When they should have been at their Master's side, to support him, they ran away because they were still loving with selfish love, which emanates from the Adversary. That was why, just when the Lord was laying down his life for them and for the rest of mankind, and when he should have been able to feel the support and the sympathy of his disciples, they forsook him. It was a good thing for them that when he rose, he gathered them together to go on educating them in the wonderful mentality of the Kingdom of God. So that later, they were able to exercise divine love, carried to its most wonderful transparency.

As for us, God's wonderful love covers us, and the merits of Christ justify us constantly. But in time, we must arrive at possessing a righteousness that belongs to us, that is our own, owing to the sentiments of real love that we cultivate. The Lord gives us his life as the beginning of a new life for us. Out of love for us, he sacrificed everything he possessed. He has left us that splendid fund, so that through faith in his blood, we are granted new life. We are able to build on that capital and to add our own experiences to it, for the purpose of forming a "new creature". This, we must be able to do for love's sake, but never because we are compelled. Indeed, to form a new creature, real love is required, divine love, for it is never through fear that a new creature can come into existence.

In most religions, they preach Hell and everlasting torments. With such teachings, it is impossible to sample the love of God. Fear is the prevailing sentiment with the obsession of escaping from eternal torments. Religions promote fear and the spirit of fear. Therefore, it is not with divine love that they are animated. Love banishes fear. That is the very thing we are able to feel when we draw near to God to become steeped in his Spirit as we seek to live for the good of our fellows. That is the way to get to know God in his mentality and dispositions. Then, we have confidence in his promises and are comforted with the ineffable consolation of his grace.

Real love is proved when we honour our brethren, not for the purpose of gaining a personal advantage or to be in favour with them, but honouring them with the idea of expressing, in this way, the sentiment of attachment that we have in our hearts. The Almighty does not wish to be flattered. He does not want us to

call Him "Lord! Lord!" when our hearts do not love Him and are not attached to Him, for then our sole aim is to obtain something. That is the mentality of a slave, but not of a son.

The Lord wishes for sons who go to Him because they love Him, because they are enthusiastic about his wonderful character and honour Him from the bottom of their hearts. Our Lord said: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." That is how we can prove our love. So, we must lay our religiousness aside, so that we may become amiable and good. Love is amiable, it is all kindness and mercy. It feels for those in pain. It is able to comfort them. It is patient, stands faithful and does not alter.

While he was on Earth, our dear Saviour gave evidence of divine love in a sublime way. Having followed the way of shame, of pain and of death, for our sake and for the sake of all people, just before expiring on the Cross, he said: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." His kind and charitable heart was full of love and of forgiveness.

It is assurance of the Lord's wonderful affection and love that enables us to always go to Him unhesitatingly and without an atom of fear. The feeling of anxiety that is in our hearts before we know the Lord, arises from the devilish conscience instilled in us by the Adversary, for the purpose of tormenting us constantly. When we begin to truly follow the Lord, we receive another conscience, the divine one, which always points out the goodness of God, his grace and tenderness, and exhorts us to do good and to abide by the law.

What the Lord desires of us is that we become good and benevolent creatures, who never allow a bad thought to rise in their hearts. For this purpose, our hearts must open fully to the impulses of divine grace, for God's Holy Spirit cannot do its work in a heart that does not give itself. To be able to take effect, divine love always needs to have a power of attraction. It is the same for an electric current: to be able to be conducted where it will do useful work, it requires a copper cable. Rubber, which is an insulator, does not allow it to pass because there is no contact. It is the same for "the fluid of life", which is love.

It is shed in us by the Holy Spirit when we live up to the message of divine grace. We can also be anointed with the oil of anointing, the oil of love and of grace. We will therefore endeavour to have well-disposed and open hearts, so that the powerful effect of God's Holy Spirit may do its work in us. We thus become children of God, worthy of the name, as a result of divine love, real love, which is born in our hearts, and which we display to those around us. It is when we let that profound science work in us that we are able to glorify God in the world, and teach men to know Him, to their great comfort and deliverance.

Out of the darkness, and into the light

The French newspaper *Ouest-France* — on the 15th of October 2022, in the column "Reflexion" — published an article by Michel Urvoy about information and how it is used. The text points out a paradox: "Knowledge has never been as abundant, and information has never been as accessible", "but a lack of knowledge, is increasing":

Knowledge is advancing, but a lack of knowledge, is increasing

"The truth has become what we want it to be. In other words, an untruth! It is an ideal breeding ground for populists," says the journalist Michel Urvoy.

"The less we understand the world, the more certain we are. People want to show what they know. 'I think, therefore I am.' When we come back from holidays, we are flooded with contradictory claims, aggressive demands and provocative manipulations, which cause such great confusion that we clutch at straws to reinforce what we believe to be true.

Knowledge has never been as abundant, and information has never been as accessible. Why then has there been an explosion in the 'dumbing down' of debate, when knowledge is advancing?

First, there is the amateurish use of information channels. Readers in a hurry confuse information with communication, and truth with manipulation. They disregard the source, the date, the authenticity of an image, the relevance of a number, and the context of a statement. They do not know who produced the message, how it was produced, who is interested in spreading it, or why it is being spread.

That misuse is reinforced by algorithms that select the topics and the approaches that your brain wants to hear. This results in a type of addiction that comes over us and that impairs our discernment, reduces our thinking, and reinforces our certainties.

That misuse is also due to the expertise that has been acquired by political and economic lobbies, influencers, governments, etc., in order to manipulate public opinion. In brief, by all those who have made it their profession to keep us in the dark, for their own exclusive benefit.

Media fatigue

The second set of explanations has to do with the overabundance of data. The dizzying quantity of information, feeds doubt and sometimes even rejection. The scattering of news, forces us to be selective, to compartmentalize and to cling to some certainty.

In the flood of news, we will always find the answer that confirms our own opinion. Therefore, the aim is no longer to talk with another person, but to shut them down in three words on Twitter [now called X].

The phenomenon of experts contributes to this overdose. By dint of calling on more and more specialists, we only end up with a cacophony. Experts, by definition, examine a specific subject from a particular angle, be it economic, environmental, financial or social.

According to them, we need wind power, but without wind turbines. Solar energy without silicon. Petrol without oil. Electric vehicles without nuclear power. Batteries without lithium. Dense cities without high-rise buildings. Each approach is obviously not enough to build a world made up of contradictions.

The last ingredient in this confusion is the increase of political and social actors in search of popularity, and the overdramatization by the media in need of an audience.

The answer is not knowing everything

Thus, the abundance of information does not mean that the offer is complete, honest or intelligible. Furthermore, it causes media fatigue, which leads people to take refuge in belief and irrationality, rather than in clear and in-depth thought.

The truth has become what we want it to be. In other words, an untruth! It is an ideal breeding ground for populists and other merchants of dangerous illusions. They know that ignorance, by extension, leads people to not know what they don't know, to believe in conspiracies, and to dismiss knowledge that is vital for the planet, health and peace.

To cap it all off: the more information there is available, the more that the understanding of the world blurs, and the more that political dialogue becomes violent.

The answer is not knowing everything. It would rather consist of raising awareness that ignorance is a danger to democracy, and of encouraging seriousness in the media: by cracking down on defamation and on fake news, by favouring free and honest reports, by

the reality of the 20th century. She felt it was unfair that she had been born in an age in which it was impossible for her to meet, in this world, the Good Shepherd of the lowly and of the waifs, who used to illustrate the hopes of his Father's Kingdom.

With her parents, Anaic took part in the practices of the great religions, outside of which, there was no salvation. But those practices had hardly anything even slightly resembling the spirit of the Gospel. Never within the church stained-glass windows was the little girl able to recover the atmosphere of the hours spent in the lumber room on stormy days, where, between two flashes of lightning, she would follow the disciples along the roads of Judea.

Whilst Anaic was one of the poorest in her class, there was another even poorer. Her name was Matilda. She was tiny and delicate, and she didn't even have any warm clothes to wear. So, in the course of a history lesson

on the location of some events, as a cold wind swept in from the Atlantic Ocean, Anaic noticed that this little girl was blue with cold, whereas the female teacher, with her attention elsewhere, her mind being occupied with the tragedies of the past, failed to perceive the one going on at that very moment in her classroom. On perceiving the poor little thing shivering, fit to die, Anaic did not hesitate, she took off her thick woollen jacket and wrapped it around Matilda.

Now, the wind could do its worst, and neither of the two could feel it, so much did the happiness of one make for the happiness of the other. From what she was able to read in the eyes of the smaller girl, Anaic came to the understanding that true victory is not the victory glorified by men in history books.

When Anaic was 14, her eldest sister got married, and the event, which, at first, was a subject of joy, very quickly became a source of bitterness. It used up all the small savings of

the family, and young Anaic, who had hoped to study, instead had to earn her living.

Anaic had the choice of two employments in town. One was in a large sweet shop, and the other was with a doctor, who had a very important government position. She had a reason for her choice. Being so fat and suffering as she did from eczema, a sweet shop, with all those cakes, was no place for her at all. But a doctor might treat her for her ailment.

When the bell summoned Anaic to serve the doctor's wife, she became more clumsy than ever, but her willingness was far too obvious to pass unnoticed. The diet in this house, better balanced than she was accustomed to, did her a great deal of good, and the improvement that showed in her health, in spite of pills and antibiotics, was most heartening.

At the age of 18, she was still at the doctor's when various circumstances answered her wish for a change. It was a change indeed,

for she went to live 1,000 kilometres away in the warm climate of the Mediterranean Sea. Several years went by in a maritime city and in the chemist shop that employed her. The girls of her own age had married one after the other, but Anaic was not seeking anything of the sort. She was waiting for guidance from Above.

Gerard had just returned from Suez after 2 years of war, when she first met him. He was an only son and quite tired of that life in which he met with nothing but contradictions, so many promises followed by so many disappointments. He had a natural inclination towards events that promoted peace, and war had always revolted him. He felt he had some responsibility in the midst of this great muddle in which men who did not know one another, shelled one another across the water. And for this reason, he had done what he could...

"Who's the idiot shooting near my foot?" the captain suddenly shouted, and Gerard

investing in journalistic time and professionalism, and by teaching, in schools, how to use the new media."

It is true that today there is an abundance of information, but also of misinformation. The means of obtaining information have also multiplied. Additionally, the media and other sources of information, often provide content that is biased or one-sided. One therefore cannot blame readers if information is not presented in a desirable way. Furthermore, two factors need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the author of the information, because the report of any event or news item, is rarely impartial. It often reflects the opinion of the author, which must be taken into consideration if we want to correctly interpret what we read or hear. Moreover, the vocabulary used is not always simple and is often unclear. This is a well-known saying by Boileau "What is well conceived is clearly expressed, and the words to say it come easily." In the above article, for example, we find the terms "lack of knowledge" and "untruth", which could be better replaced by the terms "ignorance" and "error", which are clearer and unambiguous.

On the other hand, it is also true that those who receive information often read or hear it superficially, quickly or partly. Their understanding can therefore not be exact.

But apart from all those considerations, Michel Urvoy uses the word "truth" in his text, which we feel is important to define. In fact, the truth is not only a precise description of a fact, and therefore cannot be included or spread in the media.

What is truth?

Pilate put that question to Jesus Christ, our dear Saviour, but he did not answer him. Christ had previously said: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14: 6). We thus understand that the notion of truth goes far beyond what is generally understood by this word. Our dear Saviour did not say: "I have the truth," but: "I am...the truth..." He was a reflection of the character and the glory of his Father, Almighty God. If we therefore want to receive the truth, we must turn to our dear Saviour. He is the Source of truth, and there is no other. This is easy to understand. All of us human beings are sinners and therefore imperfect. We cannot express the truth, because everything we think, say or do, goes through the filter of our feelings, our judgement and our point of view.

With our dear Saviour, on the other hand, there was perfect agreement among his feelings, his thoughts and his actions. Consequently, what emanated from him was the expression of the truth, and represented a power of attraction, generation, sanctification and deliverance.

He invites us to follow him by us denying (renouncing) ourselves. Then, we can enter his school and, according to his advice, learn gentleness and humility (meekness and lowliness) from him. This will contribute to forming a good character in us, which will assure us eternal life in bliss.

To the rescue of a swallow

One of our subscribers told us the following bird story:

It's Monday morning. The workers in a large paper mill have just returned to work. Everyone settles down at their post; the hum of the machines can be heard. Suddenly, there's a shout: "Emile, come quickly! A swallow has fallen into a bucket of linseed oil. I took it out, but I don't know what to do with it. Because you love animals, you'll know better than me!"

Emile has been attending the Lord's school for many years. He has learnt to love all of creation, especially animals. He has raised a bitch that is very attached to him. It has often given him moving proof of its affection. It understands everything its master expects

of it, and is a great help to him in his work as a night security guard.

A few years ago, when Emile lost a cherished son in an accident, the brave dog made him feel its friendship so many times! When he cried while driving his car, it would leap on to the front seat and vigorously lick his cheeks! It often accompanied him to the cemetery, but didn't leave him long to ponder at his son's grave. As if it sensed that these moments only increased its master's grief, it would pull him by the sleeve and force him with its affectionate insistence, to return home. Overcome by grief, the poor man sometimes couldn't even remember where he'd parked his car. "Jibi", the brave bitch, would always lead him to the right place.

Understandably, Emile and Jibi became inseparable friends, sharing everything, their joys and their sorrows. But Emile's sympathy extends to all that suffers and to all that needs help and affection. So, at the call of his fellow worker, he rushes to the swallow's aid.

Gently, he takes it in his hand. It is in a very bad way: its eyes are closed, and its feathers are stuck to its little body, which is soaked in linseed oil.

So, what should be done? How to begin? He starts by drying its eyes, and then washes them with water. Then, he carefully washes the bird with warm water and medical soap, to remove the remaining oil. Once the operation is over, the swallow still looks very miserable. It looks as if it has hardly any feathers left, so wet and flattened are they on top of each other.

But the little survivor has opened its eyes. It is carefully watching its rescuer's every move. Its heart, which was beating wildly with fear and anxiety, has gradually calmed down. It feels a kind and friendly hand, in which it has complete confidence.

Emile, busy with his work as a benefactor, now dries his little protégé. He made small cotton wool pads wrapped in gauze, and carefully rubbed it all over. He talks gently to it, under the watchful eye of Jibi, which follows the operation with interest. At last, the feathers are dry. Emile puts a little talcum powder on them to remove the last trace of moisture, and gently rubs the swallow's little black wings and white belly. The swallow relents, closing its eyes from time to time in delight and contentment.

It is now in good shape, shiny and graceful. No trace remains of its dangerous adventure. It took a few more sips of water and ate a bit of Jibi's food. Emile puts it on his finger and opens the window so that it can fly away. But it doesn't move. It looked outside, stood still for a few seconds and then suddenly opened its wings to grab hold of Emile's coat, put its head under the lapel, and fell asleep.

Emile couldn't believe his eyes. He was moved, very moved. All the workers rush to see this little phenomenon that prefers human company to freedom. Seeing that the bird was still sleeping, Emile went about his business. The swallow, feeling warm and safe, remained in its place all morning. Noon arrives: the swallow is still asleep, its head under the lapel of Emile's coat. Emile, having the afternoon off, thought he would go as usual to his country house. But he didn't know what to do with his protégé. It looked at him, opened one eye and closed it again, and stood there without moving.

Emile said to himself: "Well since that's the way it is, I'll take it with me. It'll certainly fly away in the country."

When he got back to his cottage, he told his family about his adventure, who was also touched by the trust of the little bird. Then, Emile went into his garden, digging, picking flowers and doing all sorts of work. The swallow stayed where it was.

After dinner, Emile tries to remove it from his coat, takes it on his finger, puts it in front of the open window and gently says: "Go now. You no longer feel anything from your fall in the oil. You'll be better in your natural environment than here."

The swallow took flight, circled a few times and then

darted back to land on Emile's shoulder. It looked at him with its bright little eyes, gave a little chirp, then a second, and finally disappeared into the distance.

Emile was deeply moved by this departure. He had already got used to this delightful company. Big tears rolled down his cheeks. He understood perfectly well that by coming back to him after its first flight, the swallow wanted to show him its gratitude, and that the two successive little chirps that came from its beak were "thanks" to the one who had saved it.

This happened several weeks ago. Since then, every time Emile goes to his cottage, a swallow comes up to him, flutters around his head and expresses its gratitude with meaningful little chirps.

How heart-warming this charming little true story is! It gives us a foretaste of the delightful joys that human beings will be able to experience when all things are restored, when they have regained their dignity as sons of God, lost in Eden. Man will then no longer be a source of fear for animals. He will fulfil the role of protector and benefactor, which the Lord has planned for him in all creation on Earth. Let us therefore work, with all our heart, on hastening that wonderful time of the Restoration of All Things, made possible by the Ransom, paid so generously on the Cross by our dear Saviour.

Modesty against climate change?

In view of the difficulties that our society is fighting against, everyone is invited to become more modest and humble in their wishes and even in their needs. The Belgian French magazine *En Marche*, in its edition number 1705 from the 1st of December 2022, explains this development in an article by Sandrine Warsztacki, titled:

Sell modesty

The energy, economic and environmental crises are the symptoms of a system that is running out of breath. This is the opportunity to deconstruct our consumption model and what it symbolizes for us, plead philosophers, sociologists and economists in a detailed and fascinating special issue of the French scientific journal *Sciences Humaines [Human Science]*.

In the Middle Ages, an individual dealt with 200 to 300 objects in their lifetime. Today, a European household has an average of 10,000 objects. And in some American homes, there can be up to 300,000! A child has an average of 200 toys, but regularly uses only a dozen... But how did these objects take such a place in our lives? Why do we devote so much time and energy to them?

Experts analyze that when we consume, we not only seek to achieve a certain material comfort. Buying allows us to affirm our status, follow fashion or, on the contrary, display our uniqueness. In 2010, the Indian car manufacturer Tata released the cheapest car in the world. But this model — which sold for 100,000 rupees (1,700 euros), and which was rated as "cheap" — displeased the middle class. It was a total commercial flop...

*"I buy, therefore I am," summarizes Benoit Heilbrunn, professor of marketing, and author of the French book *La consommation et ses sociologies [Consumption and its Sociology]*: "Beyond the simple fact of possessing, consumption exposes us to a myriad of objects that function as a language for self-expression." Historians trace the beginnings of the consumer society to the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. For Heilbrunn, there is a close link at that time between the advent of consumerism, and the appearance of the notion of identity: "An aristocratic society, based on rank, in which everyone occupies a place according to their birth, has been replaced by a democratic society in which everyone must build their identity to forge a place and to exist."*

was immediately sent off to laundry duty till the end of his time of service.

In her heart, Anaic realised that she could be of use in Gerard's life. They got married and moved to Paris, where Gerard's parents had a plot of land. They pitched their tent on it, and every day after work, they would go off to the public dump in search of materials for building a house. It was more like a hut than a house, and it was a long way from springing out of the ground like a mushroom. Autumn had come with its rain and mist. Then, one morning, it was very cold in the tent, and there was frost all around. By Christmas, three of the outside walls were knocked up, and Anaic, who was expecting, was up on a ladder, helping to fix the roof by the light of a street lamp.

She had been so greatly looking forward to having the child, but was becoming more worried about it every day. To give birth to a child in such conditions, could well give

one cause for worry. Gerard was working in a factory by day, and carried on in the evening on his building site, and they moved into these draughty quarters by the light of an uncurtained window in a neighbouring house.

One afternoon, when Gerard came in, there was nobody at home. All he found was a note left on a board that they used for a table, telling him that his wife had left suddenly, being warned by a few pains. She had walked across the town, and it was a miracle that the child was not born before she reached the hospital. Gerard then wallpapered the interior of their hut with sheets of newspaper, and, for a cradle, had carefully upholstered an egg crate with some wood shavings. However, circumstances were too difficult for them, and a few months later, sick at heart, Anaic had to take their baby son, Peter, to her parents' home, who lived on the Atlantic coast.

What a long way back it was to those impressions of blessing, obtained from the big

Bible in the lumber room, when the Good News of the Kingdom used to carry her into another world! How far away henceforth was that wonderful world now closed to her for ever!

She had to work to earn a little money, to work again under the whip of the demands of this slavish existence. Anaic, working as a waitress in a restaurant, would finish work at 1 in the morning, and start again at 6. She would walk through areas where she would brush elbows with unvarnished human wretchedness. People whose lives had been wrecked would come to her for comfort. There were women — some of them big-hearted — who, according to the Gospel, would not be the last to enter the Kingdom.

After 2 years of that bustling life, the house being ready, they went to bring back young Peter, who spoke a different dialect, and to whom his parents were strangers. However, in Paris, it seemed that it was impossible to

bring up one's own child. One had to work, to run and to work some more. So, the poor little fellow had to be placed in a day nursery.

Anaic started an apprenticeship and, after that, worked in a laboratory. Then, she returned to school and, on top of it all, was attending evening classes. So was Gerard, who intended to become a secondary-school teacher. Besides all that, they were improving the house, and when it finally became a charming cottage, they had to move out and leave it to Gerard's parents, who were forced out of theirs to make room for a road.

They set up their tent again nearby and started up again from zero. Gerard was everywhere at once, set his hand to everything and anything, and on leaving work in the evening, he would be hard at work again on his building site. Weekdays and Sundays, he would be digging ditches, even laying out his drains himself, and making his own bricks. He built the first floor on top of the base-

The latest iPhone does not bring happiness

"Because I'm worth it", "Eternal source of youth", "Isn't life beautiful?", "Reinventing yourself every day"... Advertising does not only sell products, it promises well-being, power, eternal beauty... If consuming responds to a need to assert oneself as an individual, many observers see it as almost an existential quest in which consumption replaces religion in order to give meaning to our lives. A quest doomed, in essence, to failure, because our purchases will never be able to offer us the happiness praised by slogans...

Do we ever buy on impulse? To kill boredom, calm anxiety, or fill a void? And when we get what we want, the satisfaction is often short lived before we want a new product, which will always make us younger, more efficient, more distinguished... We have to deconstruct the imagination of consumption, claims Benoit Heilbrunn. For this marketing specialist, modesty deserves a good advertising campaign! Consuming less means giving yourself more time for yourself and your loved ones, practising a sport, volunteering, etc. So many activities that have a proven impact on our happiness: "Each of us must realize the interest and the pleasure that they can find in changing their relationship to possession, to work and to time."

A collective challenge

In its latest report, the IPCC underlines the essential nature of modesty in the fight against climate change. Consuming better — local, ethical, organic, etc. — is not enough, we must consume less. Among the solutions to limit global warming and its most dangerous consequences, IPCC experts point out, for the first time, the need to regulate advertising. "As long as the prosperity of companies that target consumers continues to depend on the quantities sold, the desire to tend towards more modest consumption, even towards a certain deconsumption, will come up against the energy deployed to maintain "the desire to purchase", analyzes Philippe Moati, professor of economics at the University of Paris-Cité [in France], and co-founder of the Society & Consumption Observatory [a research and consulting company].

According to a study recently featured on The Conversation, the responsible consumer still suffers from negative stereotypes. One would possibly be perceived as a fundamentalist, a hermit, a killjoy or a snob. "Guilty injunctions to consume better have practically no impact on our behavior," observes Benoit Heilbrunn, for whom it is necessary to collectively deconstruct the place that consumption occupies in our social, political and economic structures.

How can we rethink our economic model centered on growth? How can we reduce overall consumption while guaranteeing everyone equitable access to essential well-being, quality housing and food, etc.? How can one make modesty desirable? Responding to these complex questions will require calling on all the resources of our collective intelligence. The stakes are high: by dint of consuming the limited resources of our planet, this modesty could well impose itself on us in a much more brutal way.

We would be inclined to agree with Sandrine Warsztacki if it weren't for one caveat. We're talking about the average person here, but this article doesn't concern a certain class of society that doesn't suffer from inflation, recession, or a difficulty at the end of the month. Those who are rich or even very rich, are not affected by the issue we are dealing with here. And one could easily say to them: "Consume less, so that I can consume more."

Sandrine Warsztacki is right: "If consuming responds to a need to assert oneself as an individual, many observers see it as almost an existential quest in which consumption replaces religion in order to give meaning to our lives." In other words, we have replaced the spiritual with the worldly. And yet, this unquenchable thirst to possess does not make one happy, because happiness does not come from what one possesses, but from the gratitude that one can express.

After they left Egypt, the Israelites in the wilderness built themselves a golden calf that they worshipped. Moses had been on the mountain for 40 days to receive the Tablets of the Law. The people felt that they were without God in his absence — Moses being, in a way, the intermediary between God and the people — so

they felt the need to replace God, Whose presence they no longer felt. We have done the same thing. The god of our society is money. And we are on our knees, grovelling to it. What don't we do for money!

We are in a society that defines itself by "having" and no longer by "being". We judge someone by the value of their car or house, or by their bank account, but not by their qualities. We admire the superrich, the multibillionaires: they fascinate us, and we envy them, regardless of their morality. The values of yesteryear: honesty, courage, integrity... no longer apply today. What's more, advertising encourages us to buy without measure. We have been encouraged to consume and even to shop, and now we are being asked to go from paradise into the wilderness.

That's why it's difficult to talk about modesty. On the other hand, our economy is based, among other things, on two pillars: buying and selling. Becoming modest means buying and therefore selling less. In this context, asking our fellow citizens to be content with satisfying their basic needs and to renounce the superfluous, is tantamount to depriving them of a pleasure. Deprived of a spiritual dimension, they have nothing left. Because humankind cannot be content with bread, they need something for their soul. An invitation to modesty is impossible if we don't have something else to replace what we have to give up.

That "something" is found in God and in our dear Saviour who invites us: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11: 28). It is such rest that those who find it sell all they have to buy "the pearl of great price". They no longer need selfish personal satisfaction. This "pearl" is Salvation in Jesus Christ.

That is what humanity needs. That is what it is waiting for without knowing it. God's Kingdom is already in progress. There, all people will be happy. They will be invited to change their character, but under the guidance of the New Heaven that will govern the New Earth without conflict. Everyone will be able to freely choose good and to easily renounce evil. In the blessed centuries to come, there will be no more harm or suffering. The Lord's redeemed will live in bliss forever.

ment, and the attic on top of the first floor. After 3 years of this, the house began to look something like, strongly built and solid on its foundations. But our two builders had worn themselves out with work.

Nevertheless, he had passed his exam with honours, and was in possession of his diploma. His first contract sent him to the distant overseas country of Madagascar for 5 years.

For the second time, just as the house was finished, they had to leave it. However, 5 years went by very quickly in that paradise, and then they had to tear themselves away from that clear blue sky and pleasant climate.

They acquired what, on paper, was a small property in the Cévennes Mountains in south-central France. There, they found a small dilapidated farmhouse on a bit of land, lying fallow and overrun with thistles and brambles. Gerard's diploma was out of date, and according to the education authorities, he would have to take a refresher course. His courage failed him, and on top of it all, there were misunderstandings with Peter. Between the two of them, Anaic was neutral and busy with everything else, especially their baby born in Madagascar. Both Gerard and Anaic felt there was nothing left to hope for. Some adverse power seemed to be working against them, and their thoughts wandered into dark places.

One evening, Anaic wandered off into the deserted countryside. For a long time, she gazed at the calm starry night sky, and at last, in this immense cathedral of creation, she vented to her woe: "O God, Who has made all things so splendid, why can't I know You, understand You and follow You?"

Next day, she lit some wood in the fireplace, but, being busy in the garden, did not notice that the fire was spreading, until suddenly there was a flurry of sparks and smoke, and she saw the house burning like matchwood. Meanwhile, Gerard was in town, having a tooth out. When this was done, he bought some things needed for home and loaded them on to his bicycle. On his way home, he was knocked over by a car. He got himself up and again loaded his provisions on to his bicycle, when, for the second time, he was knocked over by a car going in reverse. Terribly physically shaken and having only one idea in mind, to put an end to it all, he rode on for another 20 kilometres, only to discover that his house was nothing but a heap of smoking cinders.

So, they started again for the third time, but felt quite dazed and exhausted. In the city of Avignon, in south-east France, they found a spot where they could get their breath back. It was there, one January day, when things seemed to be getting blacker and blacker, that there appeared the first gleam, shining a ray of hope.

It was very faint. So faint was it that it did not give them any hope of coming out of that fog of despair. A female evangelist of the Kingdom of God, called on them and brought the message of the setting up of the Kingdom on Earth. On her second visit, she told them about the hopes that the Reign of Justice, was to fulfil. Anaic wished to know more about it and set about reading the literature the evangelist left with them. It pointed out the disastrous consequences of human wisdom when it is applied, and placed, in parallel with this, the wonderful science which, throughout the Universe, creates and organizes life in line with "the law of altruism", revealed even more clearly in Jesus Christ.

Anaic was somewhat puzzled. Could this be the answer to her cry of distress, her supplication in the presence of the stars? She would often meet the evangelist who had visited them, for every day, she went along the streets, from door to door, and climbed the stairs in the blocks of flats, telling everyone about "the law of happiness". So, Anaic learnt that the Reign of Justice, in a small way, had already gained a footing on Earth, which it would, one day, transform entirely. As for the present world, its days were numbered. The rot had set in, in "the fruit of the tree of selfish knowledge". As this tree had produced only bad fruit, it was going to be cut down; however, another tree had already been planted, and the Almighty was keeping an eye on it. She was informed that next Sunday, there was going to be a meeting, only several kilometres away, near the little hill village of Methamis, on a property redeemed for the purpose of those who were expecting the coming of "the times of refreshing", which the ancient prophets sang about, and wished to hasten.

Anaic set out for the place, being attracted there by an irresistible feeling. It reminded her that when she was a little girl, she had felt a similar attraction to the old lumber room, where, on stormy days, she used to discover, in the Bible, a spirit that she had never been able to find anywhere else. She got there

a little late on this Sunday afternoon, but soon enough to realize that she need seek no further. The spirit breathing on the assembly was the same as that which used to guide the disciples along the roads of Judea. Anaic perceived that here was the deliverance she was seeking and the solution to all their difficulties. When he read *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance), Gerard also became desirous of learning to follow the direction of the Universal Law of harmony. Together, they decided to set out, but this time it was for "the promised land", and they would often say to each other: "To think, it took all that to make us to understand."

Now, Anaic and Gerard have strengthened their faith through experience and the efforts they have made to obey "the law of goodness". The prospects ahead of them are becoming brighter and brighter, and they are looking forward to, one day, being able to devote their whole time to hastening "the day of deliverance", to the glory of Him Who has snatched them out of their distress.

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

We gratefully remember that 100 years ago, on the 12th of June 1924, the Lord's Faithful and Wise Servant acquired the first station of the Kingdom of God, which he called The New Earth (*La Nouvelle Terre* in French).

It is located in France — in the south-east, in the area of Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, on the road in the valley of the Durance River, 8 km from the town of Oraison, and 15 km from the town of Manosque — and was the first house of God's Kingdom redeemed for the Lord by the dear Messenger of God, and was the first milestone of community life for the practical illustration of the principles set out in *The Message to Humanity* (the Book of Remembrance).

Another 8 stations were later established in France, Switzerland, Belgium and Germany. It was due to the faith of God's Faithful and Wise Servant, not only from the financial point of view, to simply present demonstrations of what will come later: family homes and colonies in the restored Paradise.

Indeed, gathering 10, 20 or sometimes more people together on one property requires a good dose of faith, patience and perseverance. How many difficulties arose during

all those years of trying to live in a community, in which characters gradually appeared!

The house, destined to become The New Earth, was originally a hunting lodge and almost in ruins, and the surrounding land mainly consisted of swamp. All of this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Faithful and Wise Servant, who, as he surveyed the estate, could foresee the beautiful restoration of this house and its additional buildings. Time proved his faith, and thanks to the perseverance of the dear collaborators, a beautiful property gradually came into existence. The land was made farmable and has produced an abundance of fruit, vegetables and grain crops, which we have generously shared with those in need, thus living the Universal Law.

Aware of not being able to lead this important mission by himself, the dear Messenger went to the top of the hill near The New Earth, to pray to the Almighty and request his blessing on this first stone of the building of the Kingdom of God.

Many years later, after numerous experiences on our dear stations, the Faithful and Wise Servant said: "It might seem that it was premature to open stations. But that is not so. They have at least taught us what it means to change character."

With these lines, we would like to pay tribute to the work of perseverance initiated by the Faithful and Wise Servant. Not only did he demonstrate true faith, but he was also an example to all those who knew him and who lived in contact with him. We, who are called on to continue this magnificent philanthropic work, struggle to maintain what the early pioneers built with so much enthusiasm. However, we are reassured by the thought that the work to which we are privileged to collaborate on, is the Work of God, and not of men. It will triumph in every way. God's Kingdom will be introduced on Earth for the joy of all humankind.

We again recall that the next congresses will take place, God willing, in: Turin (Italy): 13th to 15th of July
Lyon (France): 7th to 9th of September
Sternberg Castle (Germany): 28th and 29th September.

Publisher: The Angel of the Lord. Philanthropic Association. Editor: Philippe Miquet. Imprimerie Villière, 74160 Beaumont, France