

(Transcription)

Rome, October 1948

## It Was a Time of War

It was a time of war.

Everything crumbled before us, young as we were, attached to our dreams for the future: a home, our studies, people dear to us, our career.

The Lord was teaching us, through events, one of his eternal truths: «All is vanity, nothing but vanity...».

It was that total and multi-fold devastation of everything that formed the objective of our small hearts, that brought forth our Ideal.

We saw other young women launch themselves with sincere enthusiasm into working for the salvation and better future of our nation.

It was easy to talk about the Ideal in that life dead to all that could humanly attract one.

We felt that only one idea was real and immortal: God.

In front of that destruction provoked by hatred, the One who does not die appeared more alive than ever to our young minds.

And we saw Him and loved Him wherever He was absent: «Deus caritas est.»

Our thoughts and aspirations were sealed by another young girl who in other times, not so different than ours, was able to illuminate with her divine light the darkness of sin and to melt the frozen hearts of egoism, hatred and grudges: Clare of Assisi.

She too, like us, saw the vanity of the world, because the Poor one of Assisi, a living example of poverty, had educated her to «lose everything so as to gain Jesus Christ.»

She too, having run away from the castle of the Scifi family, at midnight at the Porziuncola, before taking off her rich garments, had responded to the saint when he asked her: «My daughter, what do you desire?»: «God.»

We were struck by the fact that a young eighteen-year-old, beautiful, full of hope for the future, knew how to contain all the desires of her heart in the one Being worthy of our love.

And we too, just like her, felt that same desire.

And we said: «God is our ideal. How can we give our whole life to him?»

He had said: «Love me with all your heart....»

But how could we love Him?

«Whoever loves me observes my commandments. Love your neighbour as yourself.»

We looked at one another and we decided to «love one another so as to love Him.»

The more one “lives” the Gospel, the better one understands it.

Before launching ourselves into living the word of God, just like children get involved in play, even if it was not totally unclear, it was not however alive to our intellect, nor sacred to our heart.

Now every day was a new discovery of the Gospel, by now our only book, the only light for our life.

We clearly understood that everything lies in love, that mutual love “had to” inform Jesus’ last appeal to those who had followed Him, that “consuming ourselves in one” could only be Jesus’ last prayer to the Father, supreme synthesis of the Good News.

Jesus knew that the Holy Trinity was eternal beatitude, and He, the Man-God who came down to redeem humanity, wanted to bring all those He loved into the com-Unity of the Three.

That was His homeland, that was the homeland of the brothers and sisters that he had loved to the point of shedding his blood.

«To become one»: became the programme of our life in order to love Him.

But where two or three are united in His name, He is in their midst.

We felt His divine presence each time that unity triumphed on our human natures, so rebel to die: a presence of His light, of His love, of His power.

Jesus among us.

The first little society of brothers and sisters, his true disciples, had formed.

Jesus the bond of unity.

Jesus, king of every individual heart, because the life of unity requires the total death of every ego.

Jesus in that small group of souls.

And we already said at the beginning: «Yes, the Gospel is the solution to every personal problem and every societal problem.»

He was so for us, having become one heart and one mind; He could be so for more people, for everyone.

And it was not difficult. It was enough to have in our hearts those same desires that Jesus would have had if He were with us; to think each thing as though Jesus would have thought of it; in other words, to embody the Gospel in our own lives, to carry out the Divine will, different for each soul and yet coming from the same God, just as many rays have their origin in the same sun; and unity was accomplished.

The faith and love, that He lived in us, drew us close to all those that He made us encounter every day and this spontaneous love, freely given, drew them to the same ideal.

We never thought of doing apostolate. That word did not attract us at all. Some people had abused it, ruining it. We only wanted to love in order to love Him.

And we soon realized that this was the real apostolate.

Seven, fifteen, one hundred, five hundred, a thousand, three thousand or more people of every vocation, of every social status. Every day they grew in number around Jesus among us.

Our humanity, put on the cross by the life of unity, attracted everyone to it.

Perfect unity lived and still lives among those souls by now spread throughout the whole of Italy and beyond it.

Not only spiritual unity in our passionate quest to be another Jesus, but also a practical unity.

Everything is in common: things, homes, assistance and money.

And there is peace, there is heaven on earth.

Life totally changed.

Throughout the whole city, there is no office, school, store or factory without a brother or sister of unity who works there.

From them shines forth, like the sun, the life of charity that creates a new divine atmosphere, squelches hate and grudges. Many families came together again in peace: others began their life with the Ideal in their hearts. Truly, we are at the beginning of a new era: «the era of Jesus.»

And all of this because the only principle, the only means, the only end goal is Jesus.

Jesus “in” us. Jesus “among” us.

Jesus end of times and of eternity.

Human minds grapple to find solutions to today’s drama. They will not find it if not in Jesus. Not only in Jesus alive deep within in each person, but in Jesus who reigns “among” souls.

They do not have time to discuss because He too clearly shows, to those who are united to others in his name, what “needs to be done” to give real peace back to the world.

There is *porro unum necessarium*<sup>1</sup> (only one thing necessary) to a soul in its relationship to God.

<sup>1</sup> «...porro unum est necessarium» («only one thing is necessary» Lk 10:42). The quote, in Latin, was commonly used in the early days of the Movement.

There is *porro unum necessarium* (only one thing necessary) to a soul in its relationship with his/her neighbours and this is to love them as oneself, to the point of becoming one down here, in anticipation of the perfect consummation of souls in the One, Jesus, in Heaven.

This is the Christian community.

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From «Fides», 48 (1948), n. 10, pp. 279-280.