

## **The Saint in the Whole Christ:**

### **The Twofold Movement of Love**

(towards God & towards Man)

#### Chapter IX

(Extracts taken from...)

I am a Daughter of the Church

Blessed Fr. Marie-Eugene, ocd

**I have chosen you, and have appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.** John 15:16

This declaration of Jesus in His parting words to the apostles after the last Supper, followed what He had said about the **close bonds** that were to **unite Him** with them going forward:

**I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.** John 15:15

... The **work of sanctification** done by Jesus in His apostles, mysterious **bonds of grace** He created between them and Himself and the **powers** He gave them, all in view of their **mission in the world**. The **fullness of grace** and **power** were given to assure Jesus of apostles who would **continue Christ's mission in the world**. The apostles were **chosen** by Jesus; they would be **transformed** by His Spirit to become other **Christ's on earth**, and **bear fruit** in the world. Saint Teresa grasped this perfectly:

**It will be a good thing, sisters, if I tell you why the Lord grants so many favors in the world... I will speak about it further here so that none of you thinks that He does it simply to give these souls pleasure. That would be to make a great error. His Majesty can do nothing greater for us than to grant us a life which is an imitation of the one lived by His Beloved Son. I feel certain that these favors are given us to strengthen our weakness...so that we may be able to imitate Him in His great sufferings... For if the soul (who has arrived at transforming union) is with Him, ... it will very seldom think of itself; its whole thought will be on finding ways to please Him and on showing Him how much it loves Him. This, my daughters, is the aim of prayer: this is the purpose of Spiritual Marriage, of which are born works and good works alone...You may think that I am speaking of beginners, and that later on one may rest: ...the only repose these souls enjoy is of an interior kind; of outward repose they get less and less... the soul did not understand what great gain can be derived from trials...nor did it realize how the companionship it**

**now enjoys would give it much greater strength ... strength through the most sovereign union of spirit with Spirit.** VII Mansions

These texts sum up Saint Teresa's teaching in the last chapter of the seventh Mansions... a commentary on the last words of our Lord: "**I have appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.**"

... Both Teresa and John of the Cross arrived at **transforming union**... Many times in the course of the journey ... they **compared** their experiences and **recognized their unity of thought**. Now, on the **summit**, their **aspirations** seem **divergent**. Each one has a school. Among their disciples, there are some for whom **transforming union** is a **haven of peace** where God is loved in **solitude**, counting the love it gives him **preferable to all**, especially to external works.... **Others** consider the possession of God in transforming union as a means to **serve Him more effectively**. **The latter adopt the definition given by Saint Teresa of the truly spiritual person:**

**Do you know when people really become spiritual? It is when they become slaves of God and are branded with His sign, which is the sign of the Cross, in token that they have given Him their freedom. Then he can sell them as slaves to the whole world, as He himself was sold.** VII Mansions

How to **solve the problem** posed by the **divergence of these two tendencies** on the **heights of transforming union**? ... The problem lies deeper; it has to do with the **finality of transforming union** here on earth and of the love that brings it to pass. Let us try to solve it.

**A-The Twofold Movement of Love (or Charity-God's way of loving)**

#### **1-Filial Movement towards God**

**Charity** that is poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit at Baptism makes us **children of God**...It finds, in this **filial character**, its essential movement. The spirit that is given us cries: Abba, father! It makes us **co-heirs** with Christ. ... **We come from God**, and we **return to Him**. This is the **law of the whole of creation**; ...

#### **2-Movement towards Souls**

Although essential to it, this **yearning to possess God** in the **perfect vision** of Him---the **beatific vision**---is not the only movement coming from the depths of our **supernatural charity**...Christian charity longs for

something else in God than the possession of God Himself... When it comes to **perfect union** with God, our **supernatural charity** finds in Him Persons; its **urge** is to follow them ... Such is the happy destiny of our supernatural charity; it causes us to enter into the **rhythm of the Triune Life**, uniting us to each one of the three divine Persons.

**Divine charity** is poured out upon us by the Holy Spirit ... who takes possession of our soul. Charity works a **transformation** of love in us and when complete, all of our movements and aspirations are **ordered by love**. **Having become the soul's Master...** the Holy Spirit associates us with His works.

It is the Spirit of Love who carries out the **eternal design of God**... He pours into our souls a **filial charity** ... that **identifies us with Christ**. **This grace then makes us one with Christ** that we may form with Him the **whole Christ**.

Such is the **destiny of our grace: it makes us into Christ, subjecting us** to the same Spirit of Love who **guided Christ Himself**...

... **Transforming union**, by introducing the soul into God, does **not isolate** it from the world. Such union **associates the soul** with the **intense life of the Church**. The more the saints are held **captive by love**, the nearer they are to us; for in **divinizing them**, **charity** causes them to enter into the **depths of sin**, the **great suffering of humanity**, for otherwise they would **not be identified with Christ**. Their charity would not be Christian. Jesus said:

**By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.** John 13:35

In the evening of this life, we will be **judged on love**, the **degree of our love** may be taken as the **degree of our glory** and of our capacity for the **beatific vision**. Describing this judgment, Jesus states what will be asked for;

**Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom... for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink.** John 15:12

... The **love** on which we will be judged is the love that we have given to **God** in our **brothers**.

Of the **two movements of supernatural charity** in us, the **first** (movement towards God) is **essential** to it, the **second** (movement towards souls) is **imposed** by the Spirit of Love and by Christ Jesus, with whom it unifies the soul. Jesus said:

**“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind.”**

This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it,

**“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”** Matt. 22:37-40

... Of these **two similar commandments** that **sum up the whole law**, the **first is greater**; but it is the accomplishment of the **second** that guarantees the **value** of and **quality of charity**...

### **3-These Two Movements are united in Love for Christ**

... **Filial love for God** seems to **mount upward** and lift us up; **love for neighbor** seems to descend and **draw us downward**. The **first divinizes**; the **second renders carnal**...

The saint that has arrived at transforming union is no longer on the edge where the mind considers and disputes. He is plunged in the work of love; and in his experience he meets with a light that blinds the understanding ...

... Explaining the favor of **spiritual marriage**, Saint Teresa clarifies these **apparent oppositions**:

**Then he revealed Himself to me, in an imaginary vision, most interiorly, as on other occasions, and He gave me His right hand, saying to me; “Behold this nail. It is a sign that from today onward you will be My bride. Until now, you did not deserve it; but going forward you shall watch over my honor not only as that of your Creator and King and God but as that of My very bride. My honor is your and yours, Mine.”** Spiritual Relations XXXV

The **union** is perfectly confirmed. Teresa belongs to Christ and Christ to Teresa... The **wedding ring** is replaced by a **nail** that **attaches her to the cross**... Teresa is not surprised. She knows the **privileges and the duties of love**. The Christ who unites her perfectly to Himself is Christ Jesus, **triumphant in Heaven** and **militant and suffering on earth**. It is the **latter Christ** that **she is to live**... while on earth...

The **divergences** that were pointed out between Saint **John of the Cross** and Saint **Teresa** are **resolved** in this light. Having arrived at **transforming union**, they both bear within them the **fullness of Christ** with His

**opposing riches** and the **twofold movement of His love for God and for souls**. To **explain** how ...one of the **movements of love** is more **explicit in one Saint or the other**, it is enough to recall that **God's gifts** are displayed in the saints with **diverse tonalities** corresponding to the particular **grace**, the **mission** and the **temperament** of each one...

...Saint Teresa, a **contemplative** who only dreamed of **being alone with God**, undertook the **foundation of many convents**... She procured **solitude** for her daughters so that in profound inner contact with God, their love would be enkindled and put at the **service of the Church**. The **external works** that she could not do, would be accomplished by extending her Reform to the **Friars** animated with her **spirit and desires**.

So Teresa **sacrificed her tranquility** and her **soul** for a **work for the Church**. And when she had **sacrificed all**, even her work in the Reform by accepting to be **prioress at the Incarnation** that she experienced the **perfect union of spiritual marriage**. So, it would appear that the **two movements of love diverge** only apparently and only on the external plane and that in reality they mutually sustain one another ...

...This **movement of love descending** to conquer by loving and then **carrying its prey to the heights** is the synthesis of the **two-fold movement of love**; it is the **action of the perfect apostolate** because in accord with the **movement and action of Jesus Himself**...

...**But** is it only on the **summits that harmony is achieved in the spiritual life**, between these two aspirations or movements of love? **Must one await perfect identification with Christ Jesus** before working effectively to **build up His mystical body**? In other words, is the apostolate the exclusive privilege of love, and of love in its overflowing fullness? ...

The answers to these questions will be explored in the next segment: The Saint in the Whole of Christ: The Apostolate and the Growth of Love (or the Spiritual Journey through the 7 Mansions). Amen