



INTERCESSORS' QUARTERLY LETTER N°156, OCTOBER 2016

The Mysteries of Light

As we continue our Rosary prayer, we suggest that you meditate on the luminous mysteries, or mysteries of light, that were instituted by St John Paul II and are presented in his Apostolic Letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, paragraph 21.

“Moving on from the infancy and the hidden life in Nazareth to the public life of Jesus, our contemplation brings us to those mysteries which may be called in a special way “mysteries of light”.

Certainly the whole mystery of Christ is a mystery of light. He is the “light of the world” (Jn 8:12). Yet this truth emerges in a special way during the years of his public life, when he proclaims the Gospel of the Kingdom.

In proposing to the Christian community five significant moments – “luminous” mysteries – during this phase of Christ's life, I think that the following can be fittingly singled out: (1) his Baptism in the Jordan, (2) his self-manifestation at the wedding of Cana, (3) his proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with his call to conversion, (4) his Transfiguration, and finally, (5) his institution of the Eucharist, as the sacramental expression of the Paschal Mystery.

Each of these mysteries is a revelation of the Kingdom now present in the very person of Jesus (..)”

May the contemplation of these mysteries illuminate our hearts and help us to support our brothers in prayer with radiant faith.

Elisabeth & Bernard Gérard

SPIRITUAL LETTER

Interceding, begging, imploring, crying... So many different manners of asking God for his help in these difficult times. The world is so complicated! It is here that the rosary also takes on its stabilising, as well as sanctifying role. Indeed, whatever the happy or painful events we go through, when it is time to meditate upon the luminous mysteries, we say them even if we are rather in the darkness. A balance is achieved. How?

The Rosary calls upon our meditation, whereby we look at the mystery of Christ with the eyes of faith. It is faith that is decisive here: lifting our eyes to the Lord as he transforms the water

into wine, as he institutes the Eucharist... Is it simply a question of putting some distance between us and what is so painful to us? Certainly. But the essential point is not there. The important thing is that the mystery upon which we meditate becomes incarnate gradually in our heart, in our behaviour, in our life. The luminous mystery is established through God's grace in us, an incarnation occurs for the Lord comes to live his mystery gradually in us and in our aching heart. Or else, if our heart is full of joy, the meditation of the mystery of the Cross also will come to illuminate everything for salvation is the fruit of Christ's love for us.

There is more. The Lord's mysteries are thus meditated one after the other. Once more, we are possibly not psychologically in a joyful or painful disposition. But others are. So we are going to lend them our voice, our intelligence, our heart. In their name, we pray and meditate. A large space is opened before us, where we can pray in the name of humanity. I remember an old Alsatian woman, who used to say the Rosary while looking at a world map. She was lending her prayer to the whole earth.

The Virgin Mary, our mother in the faith, is there and is joyful. She transmits all our prayers to her son, Jesus. Her name is Our Lady of Sorrow, Our Lady of all happiness, Our Lady of Succour, Our Lady of the Resurrection... These titles are the fruit of God's grace in her, but they are also the reflection of our faces, quests and joys. May she deign to help us to love meditating upon the mysteries of our Saviour, while all the time carrying with in us the hope of all nations!

*Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.
Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors*

JESUS' BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN

"The Baptism in the Jordan is first of all a mystery of light. Here, as Christ descends into the waters, the innocent one who became "sin" for our sake (cf. 2Cor 5:21), the heavens open wide and the voice of the Father declares him the beloved Son (cf. Mt 3:17 and parallels), while the Spirit descends on him to invest him with the mission which he is to carry out."

St John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21

Jesus asked John to baptise him. The glory of Christ was manifest in Jesus' baptism, through the divine bearing witness of the Father and the Spirit: "This is my beloved Son; in him have I put all my love." (Mt 3:17) The Father, Son and Spirit are all three revealed to the world. The Father's voice enables us to discover the Father's presence in the Son and the Son in the Father, all Love received and all Love given forms a single Love, the Holy Spirit that descended in the form of a dove. In this request, we also discover Christ's humility. Before declaring the coming of the Kingdom, he undergoes John's baptism of penitence in order to take upon himself all of humanity.

When John baptised Jesus, it is Jesus himself who gives us the sign of baptism. The conversion gesture accomplished by John on Christ has become a sacrament for us and we are plunged into Christ's death and resurrection (Rm 6:3-5). And we who are currently baptised in Christ, in resemblance to Christ, have received the unction of the Holy Spirit and we too are called "beloved Sons."

This feast day of Jesus' baptism is all the feast day of our own baptism, of our conversion, of our encounter with Jesus, of his death and resurrection that commits us to following him in the new life of God's children, inhabited by the Spirit.

In the Byzantine tradition, this feast day is called the feast of the Lights. "This Light of Christ is merely a star in the dark night at Christmas. At Christ's baptism, it appears to us like the sun that rises and expands to eclipse Holy Friday in order to return shining on Easter morning; and finally at Pentecost to become the full midday light."

*Elisabeth Beaudon,
Les Uns et les Autres, n° 273, January 2011*

THE MARRIAGE FEAST AT CANA

"Another mystery of light is the first of the signs, given at Cana (cf. Jn 2:1- 12), when Christ changes water into wine and opens the hearts of the disciples to faith, thanks to the intervention of Mary, the first among believers."

St John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21

"They have no wine" (Jn, 2:3). We thus note in the simple words of Jesus' mother her tender concern for men, the maternal attention with which she perceives other people's difficult situation. We see her friendly goodness and her availability to help. Such is the Mother towards whom the faithful have been going on pilgrimage to for generations (...). We confide in Her our preoccupations, needs and difficult situations.

Marie gives herself up to the Lord's judgment. In Nazareth, she submitted her will and plunged into God's will for her. "Behold the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word." (Lk 1:38) Such is her attitude permanently. And so she teaches us to pray, by not wanting to assert our will and desires, however important and reasonable they may appear to us; but by presenting them to Him and letting him decide what he wants to do. From Mary, we learn goodness, but equally humility and the generosity to accept God's will, by trusting Him and being sure that his response, whatever it is, will be for our own, my actual, good.

Mary, the Lord's Mother, was given the title of "Advocate" by the faithful and she is our Advocate before God.

It is in this guise that we know her since the Marriage at Cana: as a benevolent woman, full of maternal concern and love. A woman who perceives the needs of others and who, in order to help, sets them down before the Lord.

*Benedict XVI
Pensées mariales, Edition Tempora*

PREACHING THE GOOD NEWS

“Another mystery of light is the preaching by which Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God, calls to conversion (cf. Mk 1:15) and forgives the sins of all who draw near to him in humble trust (cf. Mk 2:3-13; Lk 7:47- 48): the inauguration of that ministry of mercy which he continues to exercise until the end of the world, particularly through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which he has entrusted to his Church (cf. Jn 20:22-23).”

St John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21

“Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him. The Father, “rich in mercy” (*Eph 2:4*), after having revealed his name to Moses as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (*Ex 34:6*), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature. In the “fullness of time” (*Gal 4:4*), when everything had been arranged according to his plan of salvation, he sent his only Son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way. Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. *Jn 14:9*). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person, reveals the mercy of God.

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.”

*Pope Francis, Misericordiae vultus, 1-2
Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*

THE TRANSFIGURATION ON MOUNT TABOR

“The mystery of light par excellence is the Transfiguration, traditionally believed to have taken place on Mount Tabor. The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ as the Father commands the astonished Apostles to “listen to him” (cf. Lk 9:35 and parallels) and to prepare to experience with him the agony of the Passion, so as to come with him to the joy of the Resurrection and a life transfigured by the Holy Spirit.”

St John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21

The story of the Transfiguration shows us how the disciples experienced such a moment with Jesus: it was a fleeting and swift encounter. It was decisive that it enabled them to pierce the identity of their master, his relationship to God, his relationship to Scripture symbolised by Moses and Elijah. This man Jesus, who was already so well known to his disciples and so famous with the crowds, is here uncovered and revealed to the friends he chose. And yet the story tells us that it occurred in the darkness, because the secret remained.

The revelation is secret, but it is not confined to the privileged moment of the encounter. The light radiates much further beyond; it enlightens all of life. Therefore, what is experienced in the instant that is as fleeting and swift does not remain without effect: It has never ceased to fructify.

We are here, because we met Jesus and saw in his life the mystery that lights up our way towards an encounter with the living God. Yes, we are here, because we have met a living person, radiant with glory that our gaze can neither seize, nor retain. This light enables the re-reading of encounters, an education received, desires, important events, failures, achievements... in the light that is within God's intimacy. In other words, in the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Spirit, it is possible to go beyond his function as master and Lord to name him in his being as the Son, as Christ who came to accomplish the promise made since the beginning and that enables us to name God according to his name, Father.

Such is the Christian experience, the welcoming of the radiance of God's glory manifested on Jesus' face and that is accepted by our intelligence through faith. Our faith is filled with light. It is not only a cry, a moment of fervour, a religious moment, it is a light and a wisdom. Faith has content and this elucidates the Christian experience. As personal as may be our discovery of God's face manifested in Christ, the give of the Spirit introduces into a communion. The Holy Spirit presided over Jesus' public actions when he was making the Kingdom of God come. He presided over the transfiguration of his face, a sign of his resurrection from the dead. The Holy Spirit allows us to see in Jesus more than a master of wisdom, more than a prophet, more than a king, more than a priest. He allows us to see in him God in the radiance of his light. He allows us to see in God more than the creator, but the first love that can receive the name of Father.

Excerpts from "Jeunes Cathos"
www.jeunes-cathos.fr

THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

"A final mystery of light is the institution of the Eucharist, in which Christ offers his body and blood as food under the signs of bread and wine, and testifies "to the end" his love for humanity (Jn 13:1), for whose salvation he will offer himself in sacrifice."

St John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21

The Eucharist is intended to gather us together, to unite us, to make us show solidarity, make us into the mystic heart of Jesus. It is therefore impossible to enter into the Eucharist, to experience its liturgy, if one does not experience it as an encounter with all of humanity.

We are not here for ourselves, in order to satisfy ourselves, to console ourselves with our tailor-made "the good Lord", in order to carry it off in us like the last rites that concern us exclusively, in order to make us feel like the privileged ones of a kingdom that is limited to ourselves.

We are here for everyone, with everyone, and in everyone's name. And without this universal communion, there is no Eucharist. The consecration would be invalid and impossible without this gathering, because precisely the consecration can only be accomplished in the community, through the community and for the community.

We do not go to mass for ourselves, we go there for others and with them.
We do not take communion for ourselves, but for the others and with them.
We are the voice and calling of each person.
We are the breath of dying people.
We are the hope of dying people.
We are the relief given to sick people.
We are present in all loneliness.
We are the thanksgiving of all joy.
We are the help for all temptation.
We are the sacrament of love for all those who are hungry and thirsty for love.

Maurice Zundel, Au miroir de l'Évangile, Ed. Anne Signier

GENERAL INTENTION

"The joy of love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church." This beautiful statement opens Pope Francis Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*. Let us pray that the reception and implementation of this Exhortation in our communities contributes fully to the updating of the Church's teachings for today's world.

INDIVIDUAL INTENTION

This coming November 19th and 20th, 2016 sees the Gathering of the Responsible Couples and Spiritual Counsellors of the Teams of Our Lady for France-Luxemburg-Switzerland in Paris. They will work on the following theme: "*Marriage, a path of mission, a path of joy.*" Let us pray that this gathering will be a source of energy and renewal for the Teams. Lord, send your Spirit.



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