

FAITH AND REASON

The Light: The keeper of the lighthouse at Calais in France was discussing the power of the lantern which could be seen 70 miles out to sea, when a visitor asked him, "What if one of the lights were to go out"? "Never, impossible," said the keeper! "sir", he said, pointing to the ocean, wonder where nothing can be seen there are ships going to all parts of the world. If tonight, one of my burners were to go out, within six months, I would get a letter from India, perhaps America, or from some place I have never heard of, saying, "On such a night, at such an hour, the light of Calais burned dim, the watchman neglected his post, and ships were in danger". "Ah, sir, sometimes in the dark nights, in stormy weather, I look out to sea, and feel as if the eyes of the world were looking at my light: go out.... burn dim.. .. never"!

The words of Jesus come to mind quite easily "No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel basket. They place it on a lampstand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, your light must shine before men, that seeing your good works they may give glory to your Father who is in Heaven" But our light cannot shine before men unless it first of all shines in us.... thus St. Paul prays "Brothers and sisters may the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your heart be enlightened, that you may know the hope that belongs to his call".

The light can grow dim, or even go out in our lives. The cause may be one of many: laxity, mediocrity, a decline in one's attitudes and values, adopting bad habits, addictions, neglect of prayer and one's spiritual life in general.... As a being is, so it will act! In other words our behavior is a revelation of self to self, indicating the direction, tone, quality of our lives.

Let us suppose that you love great music, and you want to share the joy you derive from it with a friend, who knows little or nothing about classical music. Your aim is to expose them to the happiness of a great and new experience... You take him to the concert hall and he becomes uneasy very quickly. It becomes increasingly obvious that he is not interested. Your friend has, by his reaction, passed judgment on himself. The experience which was intended to bring him happiness became a judgment.

You may take your friend to an art gallery. You may take him to listen to a great speaker. You may give him an outstanding book to read. You may take him to view something beautiful. His reaction in every case is a judgment on himself...

A visitor to an art gallery was given a conducted tour by one of the staff. Many of the exhibits were masterpieces of the ages.

At the end of the tour the visitor said, "Well, I don't think much of your old pictures" The attendant maintained his composure, and then calmly said, Sir, these paintings are not on trial, you are!"

The famous English Priest Fr Martin Darcy speaks on being in a room one evening with 12 other philosophers, the occasion being an International Congress on Philosophy. The discussion turned to religion - its nature, form, deeds.

One philosopher, from Northern Europe, said that he had lost faith and was attracted to Emmanuel Kant, Leibnitz and other philosophers. Finally, out of curiosity, he went back to the Gospels to pass a new judgment on them. To his amazement he realized, after a time, that he was not the judge, but himself being judged, and by one whose standards were so absolute, so final, that he fell to his knees. The philosopher who had lost faith, was not the man who came back to examine the Gospels, something in him had changed, he had changed. Now he looked at the Gospels, with different eyes, with a different heart.

The Gospel has been faithfully proclaimed by the Church for 2000 years - a message without parallel in human history. It is relevant to every person, to every conceivable circumstance and condition of time and place. And the verdict is in: "The Light came into the world, and people preferred darkness to the light because their deeds were evil". To live as children of the light is a difficult task.

There is a darkness in each one of us that cannot be easily penetrated.

St Augustine admitted: "To some extent I may be able to discover what I am today, but what I shall be tomorrow I do not know".

Cardinal Newman states it very clearly: "Let me beg you to lead me on your perfect and narrow way, and to be a lantern to my feet, and a light to my path, while I walk in it. What is it to me how my future path lies, if it is but your path? What is it to me where it leads, so that in the end it leads to you? What is it to me that you put upon me, so that you enable me to undergo it with a pure conscience, a true heart, not desiring anything in this world in comparison to you? What is it to me that terror befalls me, if you are at hand to protect and strengthen me? You have brought me thus far, in order to bring me further in order to be bring me to the end. You will never leave me or forsake me, so that I may boldly say, you have redeemed me and called me by name: I am yours, I know you are all holy, yet I come before you: I place myself under your pure and piercing eyes. I know you are all merciful and that you sincerely desire my salvation, that you died for me". Strive to do the will of God in all things and the Lord will lead you further and further into the light... **Fr. William C. Mooney**

What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Matthew 10:27-28

The Life Offering: "My dear Jesus, before the Holy Trinity, Our Heavenly Mother, and the whole Heavenly Court, united with your most precious Blood and your sacrifice on Calvary, I hereby offer my whole life to the intention of your Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Together with my life, I place at your disposal all Holy Masses, all my Holy Communions, all my good deeds, all my sacrifices, and the sufferings of my entire life for the adoration and supplication of the Holy Trinity, for unity in our Holy Mother Church, for the Holy Father and priests, for good priestly vocations, and for all souls until the end of the world. O my Jesus, please accept my life sacrifice and my offerings and give me your grace that I may persevere obediently until my death. Amen."

O Jesus, come back into our society, our family life, our souls and reign there as our peaceful Sovereign. Enlighten with the splendor of faith and the charity of Your tender heart the souls of those who work for the good of the people, for Your poor. Impart to them Your own spirit, a spirit of discipline, order and gentleness, preserving the flame of enthusiasm ever alight in their hearts... May that day come very soon, when we shall see You restored to the center of civic life, borne on the shoulders of Your joyful people.

A Thought For the Day

Sunday O sweet Mother! Fount of Love, Touch my spirit from above. Make my heart with yours accord.
Monday Make me feel as You have felt, Make my soul to glow and melt, With the love of Christ, my Lord.
Tuesday Holy Mother, pierce me through, in my heart each wound renew. Of my Savior crucified.
Wednesday Let me share with you His pain, Who for all our sins was slain, Who for me in torments died.
Thursday Let me mingle tears with thee, Mourning Him who mourned for me, All the days that I may live.
Friday By the cross with you to stay, There with you to weep and pray, Is all I ask of you to give.
Saturday Virgin of all virgins blest! Listen to my fond request: Let me share your grief divine.

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, You will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone... **Thomas Merton**

Christianity: And let me make it quite clear that when Christians say the Christ-life is in them, they do not mean simply something mental or moral. When they speak of being 'in Christ' or of Christ being 'in them', this is not simply a way of saying that they are thinking about Christ or copying Him. They mean that Christ is actually operating through them; that the whole mass of Christians are the physical organism through which Christ acts—that we are His fingers and muscles, the cells of His body. And perhaps that explains one or two things. It explains why this new life is spread not only by purely mental acts like belief, but by bodily acts like baptism and Holy Communion. It is not merely the spreading of an idea; it is more like evolution—a biological or super biological fact. There is no good trying to be more spiritual than God. God never meant man to be a purely spiritual creature. That is why He uses material things like bread and wine to put the new life into us. We may think this rather crude and unspiritual. God does not: He invented eating. He likes matter. He invented it.... **C.S. Lewis**

We may have become careless in being faithful to our spiritual commitments such as attendance at daily Mass, our daily time of prayer, spiritual reading, and so on. Or we may have become careless in valuing the gifts God gives us, or in rejecting or dallying with temptation. Or we may have begun to allow distractions, entertainments, and engagement in worldly activities to deaden our hunger for God . . . Dryness experienced as a result of negligence, lukewarmness, and infidelity—and whatever stage of the downward spiral it may have led to—have only one solution: repentance. This dryness is self-induced; the solution to it is to return to fidelity in our spiritual practices.

In His Will is Our Peace
Fr. William C. Mooney

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