

LOVE, the Basis of the Lady's Work



"Love one another as I have loved you," there you have the "last will and testament" Jesus left us. As for Marie-Paule, after having lost her life for God, she confided this message to us: "I love you."

This "I love you" is in the present and is therefore renewed at every instant. Applied to us, this message does not ask us to try to love, but to love. Through Jesus Christ, we learned and understood that God is Love. Through Marie-Paule, we understand today what our destiny is, that is, that we too be love. And Marie-Paule has urged us to constantly live of this perpetual "I love you."

Responding to that invitation is exacting, for, very often, we have the impression of being too weak to be able to really love. In fact, to love is to renounce or forget oneself and reach the point of gradually attaining a "dimension" that is beyond us. It is to reach the point of participating in the nature of God because God is Love. It is to be in harmony with the Spirit of God in us, because since the Spirit is "of God" and yet "in us", it is truly "Love in us".

LOVE IN OUR LIFE

A humble reading of *Life of Love* has the particular characteristic of laying bare our conscience before the demands of love. Thus, we discover that it is through love alone that we can really blossom out and give its true meaning to all that makes up our life.

But what a lot of efforts and purifications are required, even with God's grace, to put love into practice! At the end, we will even have to die and be reborn so that all the dimensions of our being may be really consumed by Love, integrate it and thus "become" it. However, while awaiting that day, and amid the daily difficulties and joys, the sincere desire to love changes many things in the soul. We must nurture this desire to love, want to maintain this desire to love.

THE LOVE OF THE MYSTERY OF GOD

On the more general level of the Lady's Work, the gradual unfolding of it and the new ways it opens stimulate the love its members have for it. Many of these members are stirred by the light cast upon the Mystery of God by certain texts stemming from other religions for example, or coming from ancient knowledge, all of which enlightens us on the profound meaning of our existence in this world. And one of those new ways, of a nature to nourish our contemplation, is most certainly the understanding we now have of Creation. "God and the Immaculate love each other with a Love that is beyond anything we could ever imagine, and the whole of creation is the fruit of their Love."¹

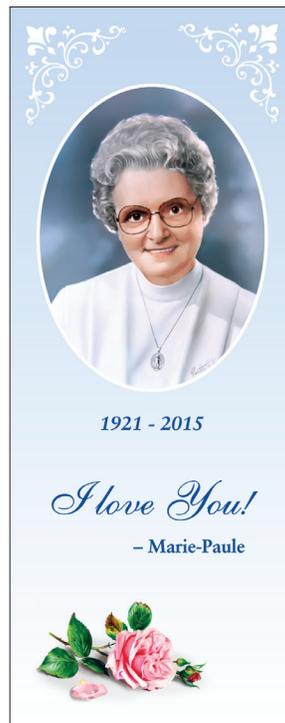
By opening ourselves in this way to the wisdom of the peoples of the Earth, we find reflections of the God of Love everywhere. It is as though Marie-Paule, the Lady of All Peoples,

were inviting us to adopt, with regard to the peoples, the same attitude she had during her entire life, that is, always bringing out the qualities of others.² Here, it is no longer only a matter of the qualities of one's neighbor which must be highlighted, but those of the other peoples and the other religions of which we are often very poorly informed, knowing all too often only what the information media circulates.

A very eloquent example of those readings which enable us to discover and love others is the following text written by a Muslim mystic and theologian, Ibn Arabi, which was read in the context of a Mass in which the theme was "Loving One's Enemies". In it, its author described precisely the attitude proper to a man who is prompted by love: "Pray for the good of the one who has treated you unjustly, for he has prepared a benefit for you in your future life. If you could see things as they really are, you would realize that the one who was unjust really did you good for the life to come."

When we open ourselves to so many facts or elements which converge towards the same goal and enable us to have a better knowledge of God's plan, we are inclined to love the Lady's Work even more, because the more we know, the more we love.

We could even say: "I love and, as a consequence, I understand". For love and spiritual knowledge go hand in hand and are feed by suffering. Only the trials and tribulations accepted with love can purify us in depth, and great spiritual knowledge is reserved to those who suffer and who suffer well. If we are really aware of this, then a vibrant desire for holiness, for the loving acceptance of God's will is born in us. Thus, we will be good collaborators in the Lady's Work, attentive to grasping well its significance, its greatness and its timeliness.



THE KINGDOM AND LOVE

Consequently, it is with the little ones who desire to love and advance in love that the Kingdom is slowly being formed. As it will always be increasingly prompted by love, it is truly the Kingdom of all hopes. It will be an unparalleled time, for all the peoples, from the new kings to the humblest of the Lady's faithful, will have recognized the greatness of her mystery and will no longer try to shy away from her invitation to love.

Brother Jean-Michel Bouchard, O.F.F.M.

1. Marc Bosquart, *Comprendre le Plan de Dieu*, p. 39
2. "On April 22, I 'hear': 'If in the past, you had, even once, belittled someone or failed to bring out the qualities of this or that one who had betrayed you, you could not have written these volumes of "Life of Love".'

"This I know, and, in fact, I realize that my greatest joy has always been to point up the fine spiritual qualities that I discover in different people, while excusing whatever failings they might have." (*Life of Love*, vol. III, p. 268)