



The DIVINITY Draws Us to ITSELF

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Creation is an act of love. According to God's plan, the human being, the fruit of divine love, the masterpiece and condensation of Creation, must go back up all the way to the Divinity. This latter does not stand passively by during this long task of love which is our ascent towards it. On the contrary, It draws us to Itself by its love.

"Essentially, God is Love and the creature must respond to Love with love,"¹ Marie-Paule wrote. If we must "respond" to God's Love, that means He is calling us and if He is calling us, that means He is manifesting Himself to us.

THE BEAUTY OF NATURE

On so many occasions in her writings, Marie-Paule urged parents to open their child's soul to the beauty of nature, to marvel at the splendor of Creation with their little boy or little girl. That is the first way to bring a child to be sensitive to the beauty that attracts and to lead it to the love of God who wants to draw us to Him. The child, filled with wonder, then develops sentiments of trust and gratitude towards God.

Thus, the beauty of creation exerted a real attraction on the adolescent Marie-Paule's soul. Let us recall what she wrote in *Life of Love*. On a beautiful summer day, she was contemplating the landscape and this gave rise to some deep reflections. She wrote: "*The immensity of it all is like a magnet to me and my soul is uplifted in this divinely ordered spectacle... Everything manifests the power of the Creator and His great goodness for His creatures.*" (*Life of Love I*, p. 49) So, what Marie-Paule saw in nature was really some of the basic attributes of her God of Love.

GOD ATTRACTS THE SOUL DURING ITS PURIFICATION

Generally speaking, the human being that gives itself entirely to God and wants to join Him will sometimes feel as though it is being drawn by God along this ascent. Marie-Paule, in the midst of the purgative phase, wrote: "*[God] is constantly drawing me closer to Him, overflowing with love...*" (*Id.*, p. 75) As she continued to ascend to Him, she was nevertheless always anxious to do His will and a great "power of

attraction" stimulated her regularly in her response of love to God. However, the offering up of herself as a victim meant that she would have to follow a path of constant difficulties. Later, as she discovered the benefits that come through a trial willingly accepted, she wrote: "*I understand things about the spiritual life that astonish me. The hand of God is merciful; I never stop thanking Him for He is drawing me ever closer to Him.*" (*Id.*, p. 104)

Another example is found in volume VII of *Life of Love*. Marie-Paule recounted in it that she was then guiding Fathers Denis and Victor who were going through a



phase in the spiritual life which required greater detachments. She wrote: "*Of themselves, they will see that they must practice detachment, and they will do so joyfully, already conquered by the force of divine attraction.*" (*Id.* VII, p. 114) Once again, we are shown this "force" which is an expression of divine benevolence towards the soul that wants to ascend, even if everything can occur without the soul being aware of it.

PLACES AND A WORSHIP THAT ELEVATE THE SOUL

Elsewhere in *Life of Love*, Marie-Paule wrote: "*The Tabernacle which used to occupy the throne of honor and attracted us in a sort of mystical fascination that begot serenity, has now had to give up its place in the face of the demands made by modern architecture.*" (*Id.* III, p. 182) In this way, Marie-Paule confirmed that a church's architecture and its arrangement can

exert a spiritual influence on the faithful. According to Tradition, genuine "sacred architecture" is able in fact to create a spiritual environment that fosters the uplifting of the soul. Through the materiality of a place of worship, through the application of acknowledged principles, sacred architecture can thus render almost tangible certain realities from the superior worlds.²

Similarly, authentic religious ceremonies spread many graces even if we are the victim of distractions or are unable to grasp all their profoundness. Thus, Marie-Paule noted the following about the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament she attended: "*I savor deeply the mystical attraction of this religious office which has almost completely disappeared from our churches.*" (*Id.* III, pp. 52-53) On another occasion, she noted the beneficial effect of a Mass celebrated by numerous Sons of Mary during a retreat at Spiri-Maria. At that time, she wrote: "*At the end of the afternoon, there was such a celestial power in this chapel! It was almost palpable, clearly perceptible, conducive to a strong uplifting of the soul.*"³

AN OPENNESS TO THE MYSTERY

On a broader plane, Marie-Paule affirmed: "*Man must recognize that mystical values have a role of prime importance to play. To belittle them is to plunge sprawling into a confusion from which nothing reassuring can emerge.*" (*Id.* III, p. 355) The possibility of opening oneself to superior, spiritual and celestial influences is a part of man's very nature. Consequently, not to lift up one's gaze to God, not to have recourse to Him or leave a place for Him in our hearts is a deplorable attitude, for man then closes himself off to any transcendence, to any possibility of spiritual growth.

This force or power of divine attraction, the existence of which Marie-Paule regularly reminded us, is then a sign that the Divinity vivifies the creation around us and that It truly dwells in us. Whether or not we feel this divine power is of little importance, but it is a very wonderful proof of the solicitude of our God of Love and of His goodness towards all the chosen ones of His Heart which we are. ■

1. *L'Armée de Marie*, vol. II, p. 38.
2. Cf. especially the book by Jean Hani entitled *Le Symbolisme du Temple chrétien*.
3. *The White Book* III, pp. 154-155.