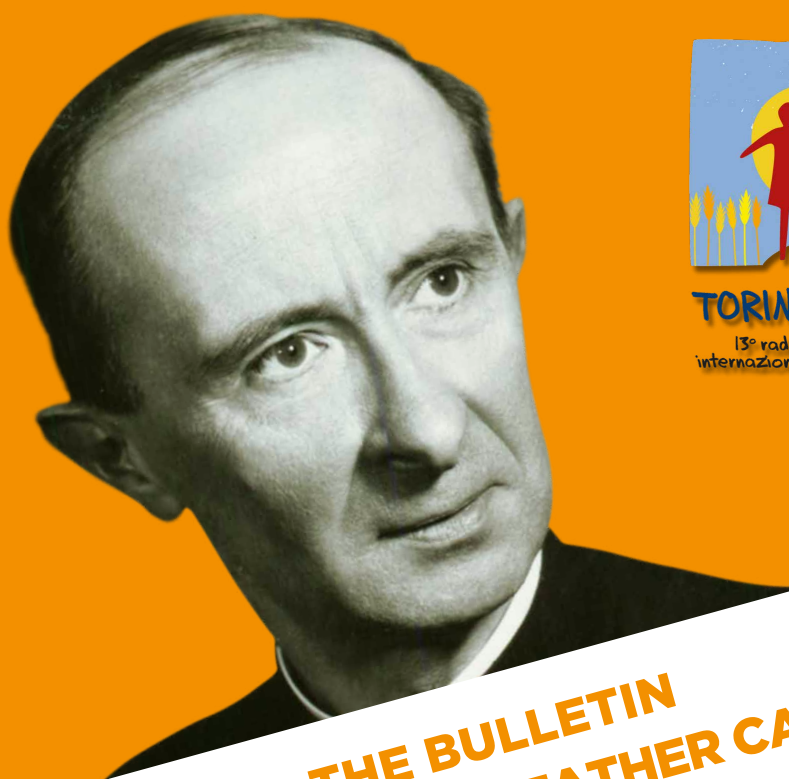




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THE BULLETIN OF THE FRIENDS OF FATHER CAFFAREL

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SPECIAL ISSUE

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING, TURIN 2024

ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DU PÈRE CAFFAREL

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The last page of this Bulletin contains the registration
form in order to renew your subscription for 2024
if you have not already done so.

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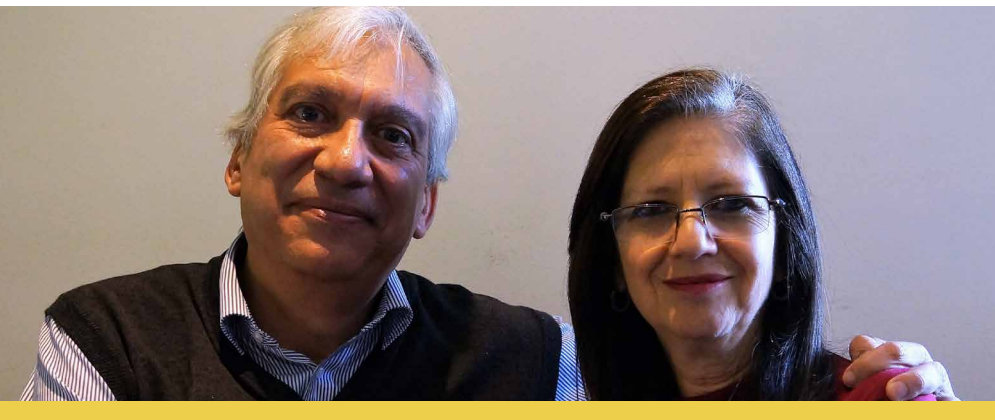
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PRAYER FOR THE CANONISATION OF FATHER CAFFAREL

EDITORIAL



Clarita & Edgardo Bernal (Responsible Couple in the International Leading Team of Teams of Our Lady)

THE END OF A CHAPTER

Dear Friends of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel,

Here we are at the end of our six years of service or responsibility at the head of the Teams of Our Lady Movement as Responsible Couple in the International Leading Team. And for Edgardo, it is the end of his six years as President of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel, an association created on July 7, 2005, with the aim of promoting the Cause for Canonisation of Father Caffarel, a cause opened on April 25, 2006.

The goal of this association, as everyone knows, is to establish guidelines and implement actions throughout the world to make Father Caffarel known—his personality, his thoughts on marriage and prayer, his spirituality—and to financially support the work of the Cause, with of course the ultimate objective of obtaining the declaration of his holiness, first as Blessed then as Saint. This mission has been carried out with love, enthusiasm, loyalty and commitment over the years.

When we say that it has been carried out..., we are not only saying by the Association's board or the board of Directors, but by each correspondent in each Super-Region or Attached Region, responsible for relaying, disseminating, making known and bringing to life all the Association's initiatives in favour of the Cause, in union with each of the thousands of members that we have throughout the world.

We express our gratitude and appreciation to each and every one of you.

During this period of responsibility, we have been privileged witnesses to the universality of our founder's thinking and to the positive influence that his thinking and his work have sown in the hearts of each Teams' member and each member of the Association, whatever their geographical affiliation, country or culture.

This universality of his thinking, as well as the timelessness of his messages, which always respond to the needs of our time, are a visible sign of his prophetic character and the presence of the Spirit in him. It is undoubtedly a miracle of which we are a part, beyond the scientifically unexplained miracle of healing that his cause requires. This would then enable the canonisation process to continue with the recognition of his virtues and thus elevate him as one of the approximately 10,000 saints who officially belong to the Church.

God's time is perfect and we are certain that at the right moment, the miracle that the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel must support and document before the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints will occur, and thus the recognition of his holiness will become official.

But why is it important to ask for Father Caffarel's intercession for a miracle to occur? Can we not directly ask the Lord, our Father, to act in favour of the person for whom we pray?

A miracle, as the Church teaches us, is "an event produced by God's special intervention, which escapes the order of natural causes established by Him and which is intended for a spiritual end."

Every miracle is a sign from God who wants to manifest himself to humanity, often through human instruments, just like when He sent his disciples to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was near, giving them the power to heal the sick, resurrect the dead, purify lepers and cast out demons; or through devotion to a man or woman who have been declared saints, or through devotion to those who, by their virtues of holiness, are being elevated to this rank.

What are the consequences of a miracle?

In addition to healing the sick person, such a miracle, on the one hand, confirms the truth of things that are beyond human capabilities and can be proven not by human reasoning, but by arguments of Divine power; and on the other hand, it also demonstrates God's special choice of a deceased human being, so that when we see this person performing the works of God, we will believe that God is united with them in a special way.

However, the intercession of a mediator with Jesus is not something that happens by spontaneous generation, but rather through constant prayers of request, presented with great faith and with the conviction that the

mediator, in the present case the Servant of God, Father Henri Caffarel, has the merits of holiness to act as mediator.

It seems important to us to specify that neither the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel, nor the members of the Teams of Our Lady Movement believe that Father Caffarel, in all eternity, would have the capacity to do extraordinary things which go beyond the action of God all by himself. At no time do we promote the veneration of his person without the Church first declaring him a saint.

We simply believe that in dying he continues to be with Christ and to be part of the Church, praying to Christ for the Movement that he saw grow and mature, because he is alive and has the ability to mediate so that this gift—conjugal spirituality—from God continues to remain alive and burning in the hearts of each of us.

It is for this reason, dear Friends, that at the end of our mandate, we merely want to leave you a message of encouragement to persevere in this prayer to Our Lord asking Him, through the intercession of Father Henri Caffarel, to work the miracle of healing, that is at the heart of the situation experienced by this particular person we know or of such a case, and we ask with faith for its resolution through divine action.

The Roman Postulator of the Cause at the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, Father Józef Kijas, asked the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel, during Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits' and Marie-Christine Genillon's recent visit, to be very careful in the procedure of documenting and sending the supposed miracles which we have witnessed or of which we have knowledge to the Dicastery.

Each Super-Region in question, with the help of its Correspondents from the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel, must designate a doctor, a Team member if possible, who will be responsible for receiving the file of the supposed miracle from the Postulator, for contacting the person cured and their attending physicians, and for obtaining the patient's medical history, all with the most absolute confidentiality. This coordinating doctor must obtain a written declaration from the attending physician certifying, without any value judgment concerning the existence of a miracle, that the patient's healing is scientifically inexplicable.

As soon as this process is completed and the Postulator is informed of the possibility of a miracle that can be proven, the coordinating physician, through the postulator, will receive instructions from the Dicastery for the attending physician to document the case according to the standards established by the Church. This will be very helpful to ensure that the process continues in a responsible and documented manner, so that the

goal of this Association and the desire of all its adherents, on a day that only the Lord of life knows, can occur.

Dear family of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel and the Teams of Our Lady Movement, at the time of handing over responsibility of the presidency of the Association of the Friends of Father Caffarel and that of International Responsible Couple of Teams of Our Lady, we have only feelings of infinite gratitude towards God and towards all of you.

Thank you for allowing us, through our fragilities, to bring the best of ourselves to the animation and preservation of this great gift that is Conjugal Spirituality and, thanks to these services, to come to a better knowledge of the infinite richness of the spiritual heritage of this wonderful man, Father Caffarel. He played a decisive role in our lives and certainly in yours, helping us understand the greatness of the sacrament of marriage, the value of his intuition about the journeying together of lay people and spiritual advisors, and the deep sense of our co-responsibility, as a cell of the Church that we form, a co-responsibility that we must encourage.

To those who will succeed us, we send our best wishes, always accompanied by our patroness and guide, Our Mother Mary, who, through her example of service and docility to the Father's will, leads us on assured paths to bring us closer each day to her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to gradually achieve this ideal of holiness towards which all our efforts tend.

In deep communion, your friends and brothers in Christ,

Clarita & Edgardo BERNAL

International Responsible Couple to Teams of Our Lady

“ So, God is in us, at the heart of our being. Present, alive, loving, active. There He calls us. This is where he waits for us to unite us to Him. ”

- Henri Caffarel



IN SERVICE

Update on the State of the Cause

*Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.
Roman Vice-Postulator*

THE CAUSE FOR CANONISATION OF FATHER HENRI CAFFAREL

ORIGIN OF THE CAUSE FOR CANONISATION

In 2003, Gérard & Marie-Christine de Roberty and Father François Fleischmann, Responsible Couple and Spiritual Counsellor of the International Leading Team of the Teams of Our Lady Movement, were invited to the National Gathering of the Teams Movement in Brazil. They strongly felt that the Brazilian Team members had not only an attachment to Father Henri Caffarel, but that Father Caffarel “presence” was in Brazil. And this impression was then confirmed in Colombia. In 2005, the International Leading Team therefore decided to ask the Archbishop of Paris to open the cause for canonisation of Father Caffarel.

Who is behind the request? The people of God. The recognition of someone’s holiness is the fruit of the faith of the people of God. This “presence” means that God always manifests himself to his people through his servant in an eminent way.

The Church canonises a Servant of God, first and foremost, to give thanks to God. Secondly, the Church canonises someone for the good of Christian people and the world. Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, during the Mass in tribute to Father Henri Caffarel at the Church of the Madeleine in 1996, designated him as a “prophet for our times.” A prophet is not one who announces the future, but one who sees what God wants for an era and who formulates it loud and clear for the people of their time: we believe that God gave Father Caffarel to the Church so that all Christians could rediscover the meaning of marriage and prayer.

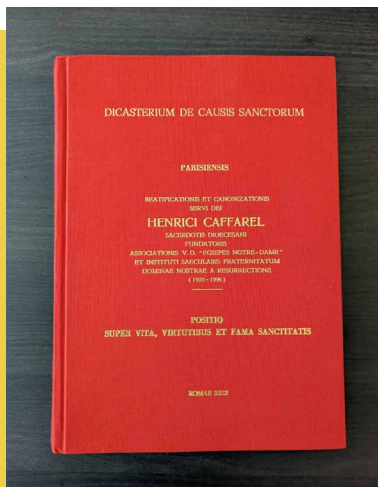
OPENING OF THE CAUSE FOR CANONISATION

The Archbishop of Paris, Mgr André Vingt-Trois, favorably received the request from Teams of Our Lady and officially opened the Diocesan Inquiry procedure on April 25, 2006. The solemn announcement of the opening of the Cause was made on September 18, 2006 at the International Gathering of Teams of Our Lady in Lourdes, on the day of the 10th anniversary of Father Caffarel's death.

THE DIOCESAN PHASE

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits was named Postulator of the Cause. During this phase, the file was created containing, on the one hand, the work of the Diocesan Commission which collected the testimonies, as well as the historians' and theologians' reports, and on the other hand, all Father Caffarel's writings, as well as various additional documents.

This phase ended with the closing session on October 18, 2014. Two copies of the file (5500 pages) was then brought to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, on November 10, 2014.



THE ROMAN PHASE

The Decree of validity recognising compliance of the file with the rules of the procedure was pronounced on October 9, 2015 by the Congregation for Causes Saints. They named a relator from within their ranks. A Roman postulator, Father Angelo Paleri, and an editor of the *Positio*, Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits were also named. The *Positio* is a sort of thesis, presenting the life, work and the practice of the virtues of the Servant of God, the holiness of his life, drawn from the Diocesan Inquiry. The *Positio* was given to the Relator, Father Szczepan Praskiewicz at the Dicastery for the

Causes of Saints, on June 24, 2022, by Father Angelo Paleri. A new Roman Postulator of the Cause was appointed in November 2022, Father Józef Kijas. In 2023, the *Positio* was handed to the Theologian-consultants of the Dicastery for examination. It will then be examined by the Cardinals, who are members of the Dicastery and who will be able to propose to the Pope to recognise the heroic nature of the virtues. Father Henri Caffarel will then be declared “Venerable.”

Beatification can be proclaimed after the recognition of a miracle—a physical, instantaneous, definitive and scientifically unexplained healing—obtained through the intercession of the Servant of God. Subsequently, recognition of a second miracle is necessary for Canonisation.

SUPPORTING THE CAUSE FOR CANONISATION

We must support the cause by praying to Father Caffarel using the Prayer for the canonisation of Father Caffarel, asking the Lord to perform a miracle through the intercession of his Servant. The miracle is a “confirmation from heaven.” We must also pray to Father Caffarel to obtain graces and healings etc. through his intercession. Indeed, it is in a climate of faith, of confident requests, that the Lord will perform the miracle which shows the holiness of his Servant... and which shows the importance of his work: highlighting the beauty of the sacrament of marriage and the power of prayer for all.

Father Paul-Dominique Marcovits, o.p.,
Roman Vice-postulator
Marie-Christine Genillon

“ A saint is not first and foremost, as some imagine, a sort of champion who accomplishes feats of virtue, spiritual performances. From the outset, they are people seduced by God. And who give their whole life to God. ”

- Henri Caffarel

IN SERVICE

Les Amis du Père Caffarel



The Association “The Friends of Father Caffarel”

Nine years after the death of Father Henri Caffarel, on September 18, 1996 in Beauvais, the Teams of Our Lady Movement were behind the formation of the Association on May 7, 2005. The Association is the main actor behind the Cause of Canonisation and its purpose is the promotion of this cause.

It is made up of a Board, with a President (systematically the Responsible Couple for the International Leading Team), assisted by a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. This board meets 2 or 3 times a year to deal with current affairs and various projects to promote the Cause. The Board of Directors meets once a year and is made up of all the Responsible Couples for the Super-Regions and attached Regions.

In order to make itself known, the Association has set up a website in five languages, intended to present the Cause of Canonisation, the activities of the Association throughout the world as well as the writings and the work of Father Caffarel: www.henri-caffarel.org

The Association has a Correspondent in each Super-Region and attached Region whose role is to maintain regular contact with the Board, to be the financial relay and to develop knowledge of Father Caffarel and promote his Cause within the Teams of Our Lady Movement. Correspondents receive a Newsletter, in five languages, every six months, which outlines a specific direction or request.

The Association has organised 2 Colloquia:

1/ December 3-4, 2010, “Henri Caffarel. From Teams of Our Lady to the House of Prayer. 1903-1996”

2/ December 8-9, 2017, “Henri Caffarel. A Prophet for our Times. An Apostle of Marriage and a Master of Prayer”

It has published 3 books: *The Acts of the 2010 Colloquium* (French, but also translated into Portuguese) ; *The Acts of the 2017 Colloquium; Conjugal Love, A Path to God, Cerf, 2019* (French, but also translated into English, Italian and Portuguese).



It organised an audio-visual novena in five languages for the 25th anniversary of Father Caffarel's death, from September 9 to 18, 2021, still available on YouTube.

HOW TO HELP THE ASSOCIATION TODAY

1) Through our financial support by becoming members. It is through the large number of members that the Association demonstrates that the Cause of Canonisation of Father Caffarel is important to Teams' members. The subscription provides a necessary financial tool for the work to be accomplished. Our membership also enables us to receive news about the Cause, information on the life and thinking of Father Caffarel through his writings, and reports on the activities of correspondents, via The Bulletin Friends of Father Caffarel, which is published twice a year, in five languages.

2) Through our spiritual support by praying to Father Caffarel using the Prayer for the Canonisation of Father Henri Caffarel:

- by asking the Lord for a miracle through the intercession of his Servant, Father Caffarel: the miracle is a "confirmation from heaven." It attests to what the Church wishes to proclaim: the holiness of the Servant of God. The miracle is a physical healing, instantaneous, definitive and inexplicable by science. When a healing seems miraculous, you must immediately notify the correspondent of the Association "The Friends of Father Caffarel" in your Super-Region or Region, or else the postulator directly: postulator@henri-caffarel.org. They will be able to show you the procedure to follow. The authenticity of a miracle must be verified quickly.
- by praying to Father Caffarel to obtain graces through his intercession. Many ask him to help them in the various events in their daily lives, for the reconciliation of couples, healings... Asking him to intervene with God shows that we believe in the fruitfulness of his action on earth today through his active intercession. This is why we should not hesitate to send to the Association accounts of these graces that the Lord gives through his Servant Henri Caffarel.

François Genillon

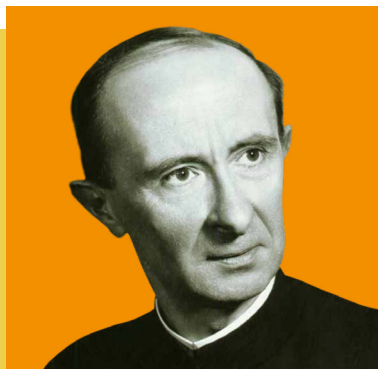
Secretary of the Association

"May everyone open themselves to this child of the Lord whom the Lord has entrusted to them; may they welcome this child of the Lord in the depths of their hearts with love, humility and respect; this is how they will help this child of the Lord to give the best of himself, and first of all to become aware of this best."

- Henri Caffarel

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FROM FATHER CAFFAREL'S ARCHIVES

**On the way to the
International Gathering
in Turin, with Father
Henri Caffarel.**

Hereafter are some of Father Caffarel's texts, which mirror the themes of the International Gathering in Turin.

ON THE JOURNEY WITH THE PILGRIMS OF EMMAUS

Booklet of the Teams of Our Lady Pilgrimage to Rome in 1970

PRELIMINARY (pg. 1-2)

"In order for me to be reconciled with the idea of pilgrimage, with the word pilgrim, I just need to think of those two friendly men whom we call the pilgrims of Emmaus." I picked this sentence out from one of your letters.

To tell the truth, the definition of pilgrim as I find it in my dictionary "He who goes to a holy place," seems not to apply to the two disciples. But why not reverse the perspective and define a pilgrim using this example. Let's try.

Pilgrims: more or less weary walkers, weary bodies, weary souls, weary faith, perhaps. "He was condemned to death..." - The "death of God" is something we talk about at the moment!

Christ loves these walkers because their sadness represents a faith and a love that still is unknown. He does not let his friends escape so easily! He joins them, incognito. Their doubting hearts are no longer able to recognise

Him. At least it still has to do with this “listening heart” referred to in the Bible. And obviously, this is the essential attitude to be having.

And suddenly, their slowed-down hearts find their rhythm, the joy of living.

But Christ is not in the habit of imposing himself. “He pretends” to continue on his way. The invitation immediately comes, “Stay with us, because it’s getting late.”

Jesus does not need to be asked twice. And their eyes open, “It’s Him!”

No more weariness! They take up the traveller’s staff again, hurry into the dark, impatient to tell their friends the great news, “He is alive!”



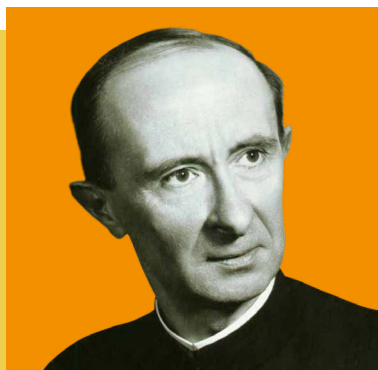
Out of two pilgrims, the encounter with Jesus made two apostles.

It is no small matter that upon their return from Rome, several thousand pilgrim brides and grooms (whether they went there physically or spiritually) announced, with renewed conviction, to their Christian brothers in crisis, to our anguished world, amidst the avalanche of daily news, the only news that really matters, “He is alive. God is not dead; He is the Living God.”

Henri Caffarel

“I hope to have communicated to you my conviction that a couple of seekers of God is a theophany, a manifestation of God in our world, just as that bush in the desert that blazed and was unconsumed was for Moses.”

- Henri Caffarel



FROM FATHER CAFFAREL'S ARCHIVES

**The Eucharist
nourishes the Couple.**

L'ANNEAU D'OR, SPECIAL ISSUE 117-118 - MAY-AUGUST 1964

"Marriage, A Path towards God" p. 242-265

MARRIAGE AND THE EUCHARIST (EXCERPT)

If there is a reason why Christ makes his sacrifice present on the altar, it is so that you might offer it and associate yourselves with it; it is so that each one of you should open yourself to its sanctifying grace and so that, together, you allow Him to make your union closer and more spiritually alive. But to remain at this point that we have reached would be to misunderstand the ultimate effect of the Eucharist. When all is said and done, the reason why Christ makes his sacrifice present on the altar, is so that He might become present and alive in you. What you celebrate in Church has to be lived out in your daily life.

The act by which Christ offered himself once and for all on Calvary expressed the deepest state of his soul, the essence of his interior life, his joyful, permanent and ever-lasting gift of himself to the Father. The reason why Christ renews this action at Mass, that He invites you to participate in it, is that He wants his sacrifice to penetrate to the physical and spiritual depth of your marriage, so as to create in you too a permanent spiritual state of offering to the Father. Better still, it is so that you let Him relive his sacrifice in your marriage. You see, therefore, that Christ's sacrifice must not remain outside of, but inside you; the offering that you make of his sacrifice must not be a transient action, but a habitual disposition, a life.

I referred to this sacrifice above as the Paschal Mystery, to clearly highlight its double facet of death and resurrection. It is therefore your entire life as a couple that must be marked with the sign of Christ's death and resurrection, which must be "Paschal." To put things in order, let us consider this paschal life within the couple on both levels: inner and outer. And let us talk successively about what I will call "a Paschal mystique" and "a Paschal lifestyle."

A PASCHAL MYSTIQUE

The couple nourished by the Eucharist is as far from euphoria as from drama, as far from hedonism as from puritanism. It hardly resembles the type of couple who are happy to live and who, in the name of so-called optimism, do not believe in evil and imagine themselves to be already saved, who, not suspecting their deep misery and vulnerability, reject any idea of asceticism, of the fight against evil. Nor does it resemble those morose families whose religion is reduced to an austere and sorrowful morality of Duty, who see evil everywhere in the world and isolate themselves from others to safeguard and cultivate an illusory purity of life. The authentic Christian couple who is nourished by the Eucharist has a mentality of those who are saved. — They are not the ones who deserve Nietzsche's reprimand, "Better songs would they have to sing, for me to believe in their Saviour: more like saved ones would his disciples have to appear unto me!" — The Christian couple knows both that salvation is acquired for them, — Christ having definitively triumphed over evil — and that nevertheless they must conquer it.

Through the Eucharist they open themselves to the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, through their efforts they practice dying and resurrecting, in putting to death the old man, the old creation, as Saint Paul says, so that there may arise "the new man," "the new creation." They neglect neither asceticism nor spiritual combat; because they know they are threatened by evil. This evil, of course, does not control the couple, who lives and counts on Christ's grace, but it is hidden in all the shadowy corners, and it is not so easy to exterminate the nests of resistance where it is buried.

Death, death to sin, which introduces "new life," will not be the only consequence of the spouses' initiative. They will experience trials, that will be more or less painful; they will feel its more or less cruel bite in their hearts and in their flesh; but they will not be surprised, these trials will not take them by surprise: not only do they know that "the disciple is not above the master," but they fully intend to cooperate in the redemptive work.

They will like to remember Saint Paul's words to the Colossians "I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is the church." (Col 1:24) They know how to rejoice in completing through the sufferings of their body and soul what is lacking in Christ's trials for themselves and for these children to whom they have given life and for whom they wish obtain even more abundant grace. They do not settle for experiencing this Paschal mystique: through education, they strive to pass it on to their children, to initiate them into it.

But undoubtedly the highest point of this Paschal life is the hour when the members of the household meet for family prayer. In ancient families, in Greece or Rome, worship was essentially domestic. Each home had its altar on which libations and sacrifices were offered, where the fire was never let

go out: it would have been like the death of the god in the home. The house was neither left, nor entered without acknowledging the altar. Although domestic worship in the Christian home is neither less assiduous nor less fervent, it is not closed in on itself. This worship, where praying together is the highlight, has a source and a centre: the Eucharist. It extends and prepares the latter. It draws all its grandeur and all its effectiveness from it and at the same time it prepares the members of the household to participate in it again. To tell the truth, all activities, the whole life of the couple must become even more perfectly thanksgiving, worship to God. "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." (1 Cor 10:31)

There is no need to fear that sadness will reign in these couples. They overflow with joy, even in their tribulations. Not with a banal joy, but with this joy of Christ, which He promised to those who love each other as He himself loves us. "I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." (Jn 15:11)

A PASCHAL LIFESTYLE

The inner life shapes the outer life, the soul is reflected on the face: within the couple, the Paschal mysticism is converted into a Paschal lifestyle.

Relationships between people cannot fail to reflect the Paschal mysticism alive in each person's heart. The Mass is both the model and the source of a new love. There we learn how to love following Christ's example, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (Jn 15:12-13). And through communion, we draw upon this love which men are radically incapable of themselves. It is this love drawn from Christ's very sacrifice, which both introduces death and brings about resurrection in the home. Incompatible with selfishness, it wages an inexpiable battle against it, but it is so that Christ's victory over death may triumph in everything.

It is also in the way the couple welcomes events, happy and painful, that its Paschal mysticism is expressed. It is a Christian way of experiencing joy, as it is a Christian way of reacting to trials. — I think of this couple who lost everything in Africa and arrived in France with their many children, without knowing if they would find shelter and work; those who, unaware of their situation, saw them disembarking, believed, in the face of such serenity, that they were just a happy family coming on holidays.

This mystique is evident in work, leisure, at meals, in a word, in all of everyone's daily lives and behaviour. The surrounding environment itself is marked by it. It is impossible, for households who attend the Eucharist, to accept this more or less pagan lifestyle which reigns even in many so-called Christian families: luxury, waste, comfort, sensuality... In their home, simplicity, austerity, frugality, evangelical poverty are showcased.

Hospitality is esteemed and practiced there and those who are its beneficiaries cannot fail to sense something of the Eucharistic mystery: there is in such a home a sort of mysterious and enveloping “real presence”. And this real presence, like the Host in the tabernacle, radiates its virtue to all those who live around the home.

“At the heart of the home, this “Church cell,” the guest encounters Christ, and this is the reason why the exercise of hospitality is a true apostolate, one can even say that it is the apostolate specific to the Christian home.”

- Henri Caffarel

I would also like to mention another characteristic sign of these homes where the mystery of Christ's Passover is experienced. They refuse to be “settled”. According to the formula of Saint Paul, they are “strangers and travellers” on earth. How could it be otherwise? You know very well that the Hebrews had to eat the Passover lamb, sandals on their feet, belt around their waists, staff in hand, travellers gaining strength before embarking on the long road from Egypt to the Promised Land. So it is for those who eat the Lord's Passover: they are not shunning the earth, far from it, but they are on their way to a better homeland. And the more they nourish themselves with the Eucharist, the more the nostalgia for this other homeland grows within them.

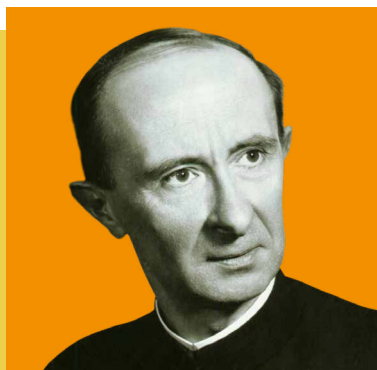
“You will be my people, I will be your God,” Yahweh said to the Hebrews. The dead and resurrected Christ says the same thing to Christian spouses. But, for them as for the Hebrews walking in the desert, this “God with them” is a God who becomes their guide and constantly leads them forward. Whether they follow Him is a different question.

My conclusion will be brief, just one sentence: marriage is Christ's admirable invention so that the Eucharist can be experienced by both spouses.

Henri Caffarel

“Not only will the Virgin teach spouses to live and experience this mystery of saying YES, of an ever fuller YES, but she will first reveal to them that no one can say YES, really, to another person if they have not first said YES to God.”

- Henri Caffarel



FROM FATHER CAFFAREL'S ARCHIVES

What is the mass?

FATHER HENRI CAFFAREL'S CONFERENCE TALK

This Text probably dates to after the Liturgical Reform

Inner prayer is the continuation of Mass and it is also the preparation for Mass: we prepare ourselves for this great and privileged encounter with Christ that is the Mass.

Picture this: for example, an Easter vigil in a large church. For my part, I imagine a small African village, the women with their children on their backs... for the past kilometer, these men and women have sung and danced. As for the ceremony, it is nothing but extreme joy and enthusiasm. Who are all these people who are gathered in an atmosphere of great joyous celebration? They are sinful people, but who at baptism became all-powerful people thanks to Jesus Christ who gave his life for them. This is why they are happy! What are they coming to do? Essentially to sing the praises of God, the glory of God, they are amazed by His excellence, His beauty, His perfection. So, they feel the need to express their inner admiration through their songs of praise, because God created the world and, in doing so, He manifested his generosity and his love.

Another reason they come together is because God gave them his only Son to save them when they were falling into sin. But they are not there alone: they know that, invisibly, the risen Christ is in their midst, that He receives them with joy, precisely because they come to join Him, the great cantor of God's glory, to be associated with this praise of the Father. Christ has a tremendous admiration towards his Father, he is overflowing with thanksgiving towards his Father. This is why He is happy to welcome all his brothers.

WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO THROUGHOUT THIS WHOLE CELEBRATION?

Firstly, to stimulate their reason for praise, they will read the Word of God: it will evoke this or that aspect of God's greatness, His majesty.

The Creed: it is a hymn in praise of God, it is the summary of everything we know about God and which amazes us. It is the summary of all God's greatness and goodness.

Then, the poor things of the earth are brought in procession: bread and wine. For it to be more expressive, everyone would have to contribute something (in the early days of the Church, everything was distributed to the poor). But it is each person who participates in this offering to God; finally, we arrive at the great Eucharistic prayer, thanksgiving, praise.

Suddenly the priest wakes you up, "The Lord be with you!" "Lift up your hearts," the deepest part of ourselves, the most intimate. "We turn it to the Lord." And now "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." "It is right and just."

Preface: this song is a counterpart of the Creed; it alludes to God's greatness, to His gifts, to all His works. At this moment, let the priest's words resonate within you instead of busying yourself with songbooks! We evoke all the creatures of Heaven, we feel very impoverished to praise our God worthily, we join all the creatures of Heaven, with the saints and the angels; we join in their hymn of joy. It as a celebratory liturgy, that is why we are gathered together. Then comes the triple Holy, Holy, Holy, the one that Isaiah heard the angels sing; it is the celebration of Heaven, it is the acclamation of Heaven. There is communication between heaven and earth. We enter God's world. (cf. Palm Sunday, when Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem).

But we cannot be satisfied with merely words to honour God. So, we must invoke before God the only true praise that could please Him on earth, the day when Jesus Christ offered himself to His Father. So, we are going to commemorate this tremendous event: the day when Jesus Christ was with His twelve apostles in the Upper Room, He made the offering of His body and His blood in advance.

But you will say, "It's no longer a celebration, it's painful." But that means that we understand nothing about the Cross! The Cross is not a painful event, it is the moment of the greatest love, it is the moment of the victory of love, it is the moment when Christ gave most perfectly, at the deepest level of Himself, it is the paroxysm of joy because it is the apotheosis of love! (even if, with reference to his body, it was the Cross). The Cross tells us of the victory of love, it is not praise of suffering!

After praising the Father, we must tell Him again that His Son offered His life to Him. This is why, after the preface, we no longer introduce words of praise, but rather the great act of praise, this offering that Jesus Christ made of His life to the Father. But it is not just a commemoration! At Mass, we not only commemorate it, we materialise it. Christ is asked to transform the bread and wine into his Body and Blood. It is the materialisation of Christ's words.

Jesus Christ takes us with Him in this act that He experienced formerly. We are so joyful that suddenly, we interrupt that great prayer to say, "It is great the mystery of faith. We proclaim your Death..."

We close the brackets and continue this great prayer of Offering to the Father. But in order to praise the Father, although we accompany our songs of praise for this offering of His Son, we still must offer ourselves!

If I offer the body and blood of His Son to the Father, we must still offer ourselves! If I offer the Father the Body and blood of His Son and if I live withdrawn in my selfishness, I am making a mockery of God. Offering someone a present means expressing my love. This is the doxology, "Through Him, with Him and in Him..." But that is not all: we have offered the Father the most wonderful offering. In turn, He offers us His bread and wine so that we may have them within us. "I give to you what I hold dearest, my Son." And there, there ought to be a very great community-based thanksgiving and not a selfish withdrawal into oneself.

A question may come to mind. "Isn't that a tendentious presentation? Isn't it just the gathering of good friends who share all their concerns? The great meaning of Mass is the PRAISE OF GOD only.

For as long as humanity has been on earth, it has sketched out this great reality: the Sacrifice of the Mass, because all these people more or less explicitly have the intuition of God's greatness (an impressive feeling among primitive people). What can we do to protect ourselves from this very just God or to try to obtain some part of His power for our business? They searched and everyone understood that words were not enough, albeit in common, and they invented sacrifices.



SACRIFICE

Sacrifices were very varied in the Bible (Abel offered the first sheaves of his harvest, Melchizedek offered bread and wine). Let us try to see with these sacrifices what constitutes the essence of sacrifice. When the fiancé, on the day of the engagement, gives his fiancée a ring, it has a symbolic value: a heart that gives itself to her. This is how the sacrifice must be understood: there must be an interior offering. I present to God an external offering which reflects my internal offering to honour God, in the hope of entering into a relationship with God and in communication with Him. Sometimes, among the Jews, another element (slain lamb) intervened. Sometimes an intermediary priest appointed by God.

Let us look at the sacrifice of the Cross: an interior offering, the Son of God offers Himself in order to praise his Father. An external, visible offering: the immolated body which reflects the interior offering. A great leap of thanksgiving from the Son. Christ was a son of man who had assumed a body of sin; his death allows Him to emerge into God's glory. His humanity is completely seized by God's glory. This moment summons the resurrection, it is dazzling!

Unfortunately, many Christians have a very poor idea of sacrifice: deprivation. It is not inspiring at all! It is the joy of a heart which gives itself and which expresses its gift, it is humanity's most formidable invention, the gesture by which they recognise that God is great and thus open themselves to Him. Jesus Christ on the Cross offered himself to glorify his Father, for us. Water and blood gushed from His pierced heart: it is the symbol of this source of life that He is on the cross. The whole earth will be submerged by the torrent of His cross and life.

The Protestants agree with us so far. They accept communion. But not only did Christ offer his life for us, He offered it in our name. On the cross, He did what the priest did in the temple of Jerusalem: He transmitted God's offering on behalf of each of its members. It is a sumptuous prospect. He said to humanity, "Understand that my Father has given Me to you, and if the Father has given Me to you, you own Me, I am your possession, I am your child, I am one of you." "What I ask you is to offer Me with the feeling that I belong to you and that you truly offer to the Father the most incredible sacrifice there is, something that no people had ever done." Humanity is not crushed by God's forgiveness: Christ offers me this tremendous opportunity to rehabilitate myself. I possess the life of God.

But can each of us say that we offer Christ to God? He offers Himself in the name of each of us. On the cross, He offered his sacrifice in my name.

AND HUMANITY'S FREEDOM?

For all humanity, okay, because there was Mary at the foot of the cross, but in my name? Christ committed us in anticipation. Mass is the time when we ratify. By presenting the consecrated bread and wine, we ratify what Jesus Christ said to his Father on the cross. How demanding it is to offer us! Otherwise, our attitude is scandalous: that of the fiancé who gives a ring and keeps his heart! "I do not want your gift." A sacrifice is an interior offering, you have to play the game.

If we get into this game, that is great. I can give God the greatest gift possible! HIS SON. This is what Protestants do not understand. They do not feel like they are offering a sacrifice.

At the end, the great Eucharistic prayer, "Through him...": through your Son Jesus Christ, as intermediary, "With Him," we are united to Him, we accompany Him. "In him", like so many grains of wheat to make a cake.

Henri Caffarel

"Inner prayer is a deep orientation of the soul, an exchange beyond words which, without neglecting the word, is made up of something else, an attention to, a presence before God of the whole being, of the body and soul, of all the faculties in an awoken state."

- Henri Caffarel

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PRAYER FOR THE CANONISATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD, HENRI CAFFAREL

God, our Father,
You planted deep in the heart of your servant, Henri Caffarel,
A fountain of love, which bound him totally to your Son
And inspired him with a wonderful capacity to speak of Him.

A prophet for our time,
He revealed the dignity and beauty of the vocation of every person
In the words Jesus addresses to each of us: "Come follow me."

He made couples enthusiastic about the greatness of the
sacrament of marriage,
The sign of Christ's fruitful love for the Church and of His union
with her.
He showed that priests and couples
Are called to live a vocation of love.
He was a guide to widows: love is stronger than death.
Prompted by the Holy Spirit,
He accompanied many Christians on the path of prayer.
Seized by a devouring fire, he was a dwelling place for you, Lord.

God, our Father,
Through the intercession of Our Lady,
We ask you to hasten the day
When the Church will proclaim the holiness of his life,
So that people everywhere will discover the joy of following
your Son
In accordance with their particular vocations in the Holy Spirit.

God our Father, we invoke the intercession of Father Caffarel for...

(Indicate the particular favour being sought)

Prayer approved by Monsignor Andre Vingt-Trois – Archbishop of Paris.

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In the case of a particular favour obtained through the intercession of Father Caffarel,

Contact: The Postulator, Association "Les Amis du Père Caffarel"

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