

Faith: The Ultimate Expression of an Affection for Oneself

**International Assembly
of Responsibles
of Communion and Liberation**



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La Thuile, Italy, August 19-23, 2008

Traces



B O O K L E T S

On the cover:

The Call of Peter and Andrew, bronze panel from the door of the Benevento Cathedral (13th century).

*Tuesday evening
August 19, 2008*

INTRODUCTION

Julián Carrón

Nothing rings more true to men and women aware of themselves than the consciousness of their need; for this reason, nothing expresses what we are better than crying out, the cry of the needy person to the only One who can respond to this need. Therefore, let us begin this gesture of ours by helping each other, supporting each other to be totally ourselves in this cry, asking the Spirit to come to our aid.

Come Holy Spirit

I greet you one by one and welcome you to this gathering of responsables, desiring that it be—as said in the title we’ve chosen for this responsables meeting—“An Adventure for Oneself,” an adventure for each one of us.

To prepare us and help us understand what this means, the Lord always makes events happen, rather than using a lot of words; He made another event occur just before our encounter, another exceptional fact: the death of our friend Andrea Aziani, a missionary in Peru, who worked for many years in the university, and who has left a mark wherever he’s been.

In a letter Andrea wrote years ago to a friend (who had left for a meeting with the university students of Cuzco), a letter Fr. Giusani later quoted, Andrea expressed well his heartfelt desire, “I am certain that in this ‘missionary bath’ of these days there will emerge and grow, powerful and glad in you—and thus in all of us—the con-

sciousness, the certainty of Christ in us and for us. *O quam amabilis es bone Jesu.*“ These are the words of a man who is almost confessing it to himself, without thinking in the least that today we might read it to everyone! He continued, “...that someone would fall in love with what we’ve fallen in love with!” This is the desire that what you love becomes a love for everyone, that others as well can be seized by He who has seized us. “But for this to happen, we have to burn, literally be aflame with passion for man, that Christ may reach him. ‘The flame must burn.’” Fr. Giussani, commenting on this letter, said, “I challenge you to find a similar testimony, anywhere, any time, in any part of the world, with any man.” Testimony doesn’t mean words, but an experience perceived, penetrated, lived, felt, inevitable, inexorable, superabundantly evident.

There’s no need to add anything to these words of Fr. Giussani’s about Andrea, words that brought to my mind the deaths of other friends of ours, like Fr. Danilo (who spent years in Paraguay and was beginning in Argentina), Giovanna (for years in Uganda), and Alberto (tried by long illness): witnesses to the death, all placed before us at the beginning of this encounter. I can’t think of them without there coming to mind that great expression—which describes our situation—pronounced in the Letter to the Hebrews, after listing an interminable series of witnesses to the faith, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.”¹ These witnesses had their gaze fixed on Jesus and traveled their life in this race to reach Him who had reached them, and they lived this testimony before our eyes, so we might see how it is possible to live the faith in this cultural and historical context of ours.

At the same time, many of us have had the opportunity to begin reading the text of the Equipes of 1982 and 1983, in which Fr. Giussani—after the visit to John Paul II, when the Holy Father said, “You have no homeland, because you cannot be assimilated to this society”²—described how we are without a homeland if we want to live with our eyes fixed on Jesus. This makes us perceive on the one hand the importance of these witnesses, and on the other, the decisive importance of doing the journey we proposed at the Fraternity Spiritual Exercises,³ because in order truly to be able to live without a homeland, the faith must truly satisfy, and not be something just made of words. This is why I emphasized at the Exer-

cises that the test of faith is satisfaction, and this putting together of faith and satisfaction is decisive, because so often we speak of faith as if it had nothing to do with satisfaction: we would find satisfaction elsewhere, according to our frameworks or images, as if there were no real and true relationship between faith and satisfaction. Instead, beginning to put them together enables us to start the verification to assess up to what point for us faith is the acknowledgment of something so real, of a Presence that is so real, true because real, that it brings satisfaction.

Therefore, the work ahead of us in these days can't possibly be just throwing words to the wind or someone developing whatever reflections might come to mind; instead, it will be the verification of whether faith brings with itself this satisfaction, which enables us to live in any situation with our eyes fixed on Jesus, author and perfecter of faith.

Now, in order to truly verify this faith—Fr. Giussani always says—the human is necessary. In *Uomini senza patria* there are spine-tingling pages: “The first condition for the realization of the event, the Movement as event [or Christianity as event], as impressive phenomenon, the first condition is precisely this sentiment of one’s own humanity [...]: the “affection for oneself.” The affection for your own humanity is the opposite of egotism, because affection for yourself or your own humanity, rather than being an avid affirmation of what you think or feel, is instead wonder at something you find in yourself and that you didn’t give yourself. In affection for yourself, in attachment to yourself, original, there is the affirmation of the surprise at not being made by yourself, the wonder of this objectivity that is you, this subject, the marvel of this thing called ‘I.’”⁴ In order to avoid misunderstandings, he explains that this affection for yourself leads to “the seriousness of gaze at your own needs. [...] In fact, we are bound to feel the exigencies or needs [...] and we lament with a cry of pain, with a lament, when they’re not met, but normally we don’t take them seriously.”⁵

In order to have this true affection for yourself you need poverty of spirit. “Affection for yourself demands poverty. This is why Christ said, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,’ or ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice,’ because it’s not attachment to something we ourselves have defined, but to something that defines us; the acknowledgment of something that defines us, without our having been able to intervene to determine the ques-

tion. Thus, the need for love or the need for personal fulfillment or the need for companionship is, without equal, something greater and deeper to hear and heed with seriousness; there's no comparison with all the obstinate and furious behavior with which we want the object we've thought of, imagined, or chosen."⁶

Those who don't perceive this need, this need that you haven't given yourself but that must be acknowledged, those who aren't aware of this need, don't feel the urge to reach faith; they can stop halfway down the road; they can halt at the sign. This is why Fr. Giussani affirmed that without this [perception of need], the Christian event isn't possible—that is, it's impossible for the event to take possession of us, to truly happen in us. Therefore, he underlines that affection for oneself “leads us to rediscover the constitutive exigencies, the original needs, their nakedness and vastness.”⁷ He insists, “The poor in spirit are those who have nothing, except one thing, through which and by which they are made: an endless aspiration [...]: a boundless expectant awaiting. It's not a boundless expectant awaiting because the heap of things expected is endless. No, they don't expect anything, but they live a boundless openness—and don't expect anything! As the poet Clemente Rebora said, [...] “I'm not waiting for anyone...,” and yet you're there, entirely outstretched, intent. [...] This is the originality of man.”⁸ The originality of man is the expectant awaiting of the infinite: man entirely outstretched, intent on something.

The more I read these things, the more I understand why I always returned to compare myself with Fr. Giussani's texts: because I needed this gaze full of tenderness, full of an embrace of my humanity! You don't find many people capable of looking at human nature this way, looking at the totality of man without reducing it. Here is true liberation: you feel such a gaze upon yourself, in this immensity of your own humanity. “Seriousness in affection for yourself is the perception of your own boundless need, but—I insist—not of your boundless need in the sense that you want a hundred thousand things, and then you also desire the hundred thousand and first! It's boundless precisely because the “I” doesn't prefix any image of things that are needed: The I ‘is’ need!”⁹ All this isn't merely a premise before passing to what's truly important, because Giussani then points to “affection for the human— [...] attachment full of esteem and compassion, of mercy, for oneself, [...] that attachment that your mother had for you, especially when you were little (but also now that you're big)—if there isn't a little

bit of this in us, for ourselves, we lack the ground upon which to build. The Movement is born of this, born of this affection for your own humanity. [...] Parents, homeland, the land of your birth, or the Mystery who makes things, God, only become familiar to the extent that they are perceived as—in a certain sense—part of yourself, constitutive of yourself.”¹⁰

For someone who speaks like this, faith isn’t optional; reaching the point of acknowledging Him is indispensable, because it is there, in the acknowledgment of Christ, where you can find the answer to this endless need, to this expectant awaiting of the infinite. We’ve arrived here today from all over the world for this. If it weren’t for this, it would be a waste of time. If this place didn’t claim to respond to this, it would be a bad joke.

This week the Church, aware of the drama harbored in each human heart, proposes this Offertory Prayer: “Lord, accept our sacrifice as a holy exchange of gifts. By offering what you have given us, may we receive the gift of Yourself”¹¹ The only thing we need is “Yourself;” no other thing is enough for this need of ours. You grant us in exchange—for these poor things we give You, and that You gave us in the first place—Yourself. This is why, in the dialogue with the university students reported in the book, Fr. Giussani often uses this expression: “My heart and my flesh exult in the living God.”¹² My heart is glad because God lives! The fact that the Infinite exists, that God exists is what makes the heart glad, because there is an answer to our desire.

So when we speak of faith, we’re speaking of this, of the answer to this. But in order to understand this, in order to be able to understand the difference between faith and any other thing, this kind of humanity is required. Otherwise, we can speak about faith without having faith, without needing faith, because we don’t have within the urgency for this You, this “You Yourself” spoken of in the Liturgy, because we can fill our life with so many useless things, or not have the courage to have this seriousness with our needs, thinking already in advance that there are no answers.

For this reason, Fr. Giussani says that we can have one of the two attitudes described in the Gospel: “Imagine when Jesus Christ began speaking, on the roads, in the squares. The Gospel documents immediately two types of attitude – it’s not difficult to see. On the one hand, there were those who already had the solutions to things in their pocket, or who already knew what instruments

there were to face the problem of man and of the people (these were the scribes and Pharisees), and with them all those who participated in the spirit of this attitude. Imagine how they stood there listening, like stones upon which the words fell uselessly, or like stones that contradicted those words, skeptically or with a radically opposite dialectic: the stone of that attitude rejected the offering of that discourse, contradicted it or let it fall. Instead, let's try to imagine the other people, the poor people. Not 'poor people' because they were poor—Nicodemus wasn't a poor man and many others, the Gospel notes, weren't poor—but poor people in terms of the heart, who went to listen to Him because "no man has ever spoken like this man!"—that is, because they felt animated, touched in their affection; they felt renewed in the affection for themselves, their humanity, in the sentiment of their own humanity. These people followed Him by the thousands into the desert, even forgetting to eat. And what was the first factor that defined that phenomenon? Jesus Christ? No! The first factor defining that phenomenon is that they were poor people who felt—as I've said—mercy for themselves. They were people who hungered and thirsted [...]. What do hunger and thirst mean? [...] Desiring that your own humanity be fulfilled, the emergence of the true sentiment of your own humanity."¹³

You would need some kind of total anesthesia in order to entirely lose your sense of attachment to yourself. The type of society we live in can achieve this kind of total anesthesia, but not permanently (there's always a crack!). Even these extremely widespread total anesthetics have a limit, can't be permanent, and so suffering and the wound are unavoidable. This lets grace enter, through this suffering and this wound.

All of us have arrived here, whatever our situation may be, with this wound. Let's pray for this openness for ourselves—and each other. We can be here like the many who went to find Jesus and were like stones, or we can be with the open wound, like human beings with all our needs. Rereading the Gospel, I was struck by how the crowd was described: they followed Him for the passion of hearing Him, but without engaging their own hearts deep down, without total involvement. This is why we've chosen this title: "An Adventure for Oneself." If these days and in general our participation in the Movement aren't an adventure for ourselves, everything is useless. Being together is helping each other so that these days

become an adventure for each of us. The assemblies we'll hold express the desire and the attempt to recount the experiences, difficulties, questions, and testimonies—all that helps or hinders us in living faith as men and women, as a response to this human need of ours. The test of faith is satisfaction: this fact keeps us from letting ourselves wander off into minute analyses or discourses. These days can be an occasion, an extra occasion given to our humanity for a step forward in the awareness of what we are and who Christ is, who Christ is for each of us, for the human need that we all are. Let's accompany each other in this.

*Thursday morning
August 21, 2008*

CLARIFICATION

Julián Carrón

I'll try to clarify the journey made up to this point in order to continue the work of these days. From yesterday's assemblies two issues have emerged clearly.

1. From faith as knowledge to ethics

The first issue I would identify as a shift from faith as knowledge to ethics. The proof of it is what often emerges in our contributions, that someone begins speaking about faith as knowledge, but then shifts to "how can I be worthy?" Since this is a fairly common question, I want to dwell upon it for a little while, because it's the same problem that emerged in June in a meeting with responsables for university students, when a student said, "I've noticed that often we tell each other about many truly beautiful things, but at a certain point I feel a bit ashamed of saying that what I'm really seeking, deep down, is Christ—like if I said that I go to the community vacation because it expresses a unity, a beautiful companionship, and I stop there. I know that, deep down, what I'm seeking is an Other, but I've a certain degree of timidity, of embarrassment to say that that thing there, Christ, is what truly corresponds to me." So what happens here? The center of interest shifts from the beautiful things, from the truly beautiful things that happen, to the problem of shame. I told the young man, "I'm not worried about your shame. I'm worried

about the immorality in respect to the beautiful things, the truly beautiful things that you acknowledge that happen. You can't overcome this shame of yours. If you were able to create the beautiful things, you wouldn't need Christ present who draws all of you to Him. This is why the Lord answers you, continuing to make beautiful things happen, making them happen anew before your eyes, so that sometimes you'll let yourself be drawn to Him, and be so happy that it'll overcome even your shame." It's stupendous! What a method, what tenderness of the Mystery, who leans down to us, who stoops down over us to draw us to the knowledge of Him through what He makes happen in reality! He doesn't give you a speech. He continues to make things happen. In this, we see once again how important it is for the fact of Christ and the facts that Christ makes happen before our eyes to find an "I," a human being to take root in, a heart, simplicity of heart that makes us overcome the temptation to shift our gaze from the facts. In working, He invites us to fix our eyes on His presence, not on our commitments (because with our efforts we're not going anywhere). Our commitment, our freedom is in play before that Presence. Rose said this perfectly in the video yesterday on the Meeting Point of Kampala: the things to do are tiring; it's *looking* that moves us, that touches us profoundly. It's a simple truth that Fr. Giussani always reminded us of; the Christian journey is simple. All the complications begin when that simplicity of heart is missing, and then everything becomes truly complicated, because even if I could do things in exactly the right way, the problem of faith would remain intact, because I wouldn't have begun to respond to the challenge of facts that call me to another thing. This is why so often our insistence on exactness is our alibi ("I'm not adequate, I'm not coherent, I'm not worthy, I'm not..., I'm not..., I'm not..., I'm not...") to avoid accepting the challenge that the presence of Christ before our eyes hurls at us. This is immorality.

2. Intimism

The second open question is that of intimism, or, to use the formulation that emerged in the Assembly, "remaining suspended." At times, hearing these things can scandalize us. Instead, for me, paradoxically, the fact that these things are beginning to come out

is a sign that finally something is moving. Why do I say that finally something is beginning to move? Because there is a new awareness in those who for years have identified Christ only with the companionship or who have reduced Christ to the sign or Christ to the effects, the fruit, or Christian values, the effects Christ provokes. These people haven't had the problem before of thinking whether Christ is intimistic for them or not, they haven't had the problem, they didn't feel the risk of affirming something that might not be real—because they hadn't yet begun the journey of faith! I don't know if I've explained myself. When do we begin to ask whether what we affirm is real? When? When we begin to feel the shiver of risk down our spines. So let's be careful not to try to resolve this risk—risk in the good sense of the term, meaning challenge, by repeating the correct and clean discourse. Instead, let's ask ourselves: when I affirm Christ, am I affirming something real or not? Beginning to feel this shiver in the depths of your own "I" is the symptom that something is finally beginning to move. So many times in the life of the Church, when we're in difficulty or on the defensive, we prefer to return to repeating orthodoxy. We can even repeat orthodoxy and cleave to sound doctrine to avoid once again dealing with what happens, in another way, to avoid accepting the challenge of the facts!

Those who don't risk, those who don't truly set themselves in action to undertake the journey of faith may avoid erring, but they'll never reach faith, and will realize it right away from the way they live reality, in the way they stay in reality. It's not the same thing to have faith (faith as something that I acknowledge as real) and not have it. A correct, clean discourse will not generate impressive persons and witnesses like those we've seen and continually see. Do you understand? Not at all! By no means!

What is the correction that School of Community,¹⁴ and therefore the content of the Exercises, gives for both cases? Faith as a journey of knowledge.

The first way to defeat these risks (above all that of intimism, that is, the question of whether what I adhere to is real or not) is to read the tenth chapter of *The Religious Sense*, because now we can pick up the work again, from within this risk, and truly begin to understand the spectacular contribution that Fr. Giusani gives us to resolve it. The point of departure is the quip I often make when my students ask me, "Are you sure about what

you're saying?" "Yes, because I don't start out from God; I start out from reality." This is the methodological import of the tenth chapter of *The Religious Sense*. The "I" is stirred in the encounter with reality, and this is the beginning of the journey of knowledge, amazement before reality; I must explain the presence of reality, and I can't do so adequately if that Mystery at the origin of reality isn't more real than reality! But this journey seems contrived, unnatural to us; that is, there is this separation between God and our experience of reality. It almost seems that going all the way to the origin of the given, journeying from the sign to the meaning, is a straining for religious purposes and not what is originally proper to reason in the face of all things; one reacts as if it weren't reality itself, happening, that demands this journey, challenging reason to undertake this journey. But the happening of reality in and of itself is what challenges reason, provokes, invites it! The challenge isn't added afterwards, by the intellect or the will. The character of the sign isn't a subjective mantle thrown over an objective fact that is originally without this character. Reality is a sign; it doesn't become a sign because I say so, because of an operation of the subject. Thus, it is a sign for a subject, not something a subject grants.

As Fr. Giussani said in *The Religious Sense*, the way reality presents itself to me is a solicitation "to engage in a search for some other thing, something beyond immediate appearances [and this is why the shiver happens, because it is beyond what appears; it is there within, but beyond]. It latches on to my consciousness, enabling it to pre-sense and perceive something else. [...] I can express this reaction with questions: What is this in front of me? Why this?"¹⁵ Good. "What do we call something which is seen and touched, which moves me towards something else when I see and touch it? It is called a sign."¹⁶ (We should know this School of Community text by heart.) Sign: in order to explain it, I need to affirm something else. Like in the example of the flowers: when we receive a bouquet of flowers, the first thing we ask ourselves is who the sender is. But why am I convinced that this "who" exists, and that he's not just a mind-game of mine, that he isn't virtual, that he's not intimistic, that he's not suspended in the air? Why am I convinced? Because of the presence of the flowers.

Pay attention, because dwelling on this dynamic isn't banal; in itself this should already defeat the fundamental objection of Ludwig Feuerbach that the religious impetus is simply a projec-

tion. But I'll return to this later.

The dynamic of faith is the same as the dynamic of reality, brought to the greatest power, because not only do I find before me reality, something real, but such an exceptional reality that the whole journey of knowledge is launched much more easily. But the dynamic is literally the same. So faith doesn't initiate from a suggestion, a sentiment, an imagination; everything begins in the face of an event that happens and that provokes reason more than all the others. At the beginning, therefore, there isn't an imagination about what is unseen, a flight into the otherworld, a surge of the emotions into the invisible, but a given that sets itself forward and demands an explanation, that engages reason like nothing else, because nothing else mobilizes, jolts humanity like this thing.

For this reason, if I don't choose to journey on this road of knowledge, provoked by this exceptional fact I find in front of me, then without realizing it I end up having a fideistic concept of faith. You can be in the Movement and have a fideistic conception of faith, so that the object believed in isn't real, but is placed or posited by sentiment, by a subjective impulse. A faith without reason, that has nothing to do with knowledge, isn't a faith grounded in certainty that Christ exists. This is why the issue is the one we said at the Exercises: the problem of faith doesn't regard what we don't see, but what we *do* see. At the beginning of faith there isn't a subjective initiative, a sentiment, a decision, an imagination, but a fact: "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a Person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction."¹⁷ Faith doesn't start from within, but from without, from the happening of something that strikes and provokes the subject in his fundamental dimensions: reason, heart, freedom, and affection.

As we can see, the understanding that faith is knowledge isn't consolidated at all in us. When we can use it metaphorically, then it's knowledge, but only so to speak. How do we see this? From the fact that then we don't use it as something real; we don't count on those things as if they were real things. For resolving problems, entering into reality, living our circumstances, facing difficulties, living, it's extraneous. Then when we find someone who speaks about the Mystery as something real or we see someone who moves, starting from the Mystery as something real,

then we budge right away and, in the face of our discomfort, the nature of the problem comes to light. In this we can understand, we can realize the cultural import of the effort we've seen Fr. Giussani make, for years, to give us the instruments to battle with, to give us the instruments that enable us to come out of a situation with centuries-old roots (as if we were children of Descartes or Immanuel Kant), in which certainty is given by thought or by force of sentiment, not by reality as an event.

So then, why is Feuerbach wrong? Why isn't it our desire that invents God or acts as if Christ were present? Why is it that faith isn't a projection I've inherited and remain attached to, that makes me feel secure psychologically and that I won't reject, but that deep down has no reasons and doesn't impact upon my life? Feuerbach is wrong because the point of departure of faith—as we always say—is something outside of me, an exceptional fact, that has no comparison, desirable and impossible at the same time, that generates a humanly unique experience and solicits reason, demanding an explanation. The very fact that I see asks to be explained. Feuerbach is wrong: it may be that I invent; it may be that I have this sentiment; it may be that I have this need; it may be everything; I grant you everything, but that subject who thinks all this does not make himself, and if he doesn't make himself then it is an Other who makes him, who isn't virtual but is real—more real than me, more real than reality.

If we're willing to let ourselves be moved and touched, to set into action all our human capacity (which isn't just our sentiment, but also reason and freedom and affection), we can travel a journey of knowledge that brings us to faith and to living the faith in Jesus Christ as human beings, without censuring anything, with all our humanity. And the test for verifying whether I've walked the journey of knowledge and faith is called satisfaction. If what we've said so far weren't enough, there's still a test that keeps us from being up in the air constantly, being in the virtual: the test is if I can have a real experience of satisfaction, that is, of correspondence. Because in order to find satisfaction, the object that satisfies me must be *real*. Try to seek satisfaction only in the virtual. Without a real You, no satisfaction will hold. For this reason, faith, as we said at the beginning, isn't optional. But so often we, too, can use the words for our convenience. You can see it when we use the words "correspondence," and "satisfaction." Let's not think we can get away with pulling a fast one.

Someone wrote me, “Often, we identify the experience of satisfaction with the fact of succeeding in having things, some success, or the recognition of others. Can you explain what the experience of satisfaction in faith truly means?” Let’s look things in the face and not continually give into to our deceitfulness, because it’s not that we don’t know when we put the shoe on the wrong foot; it’s not that we don’t know if it corresponds or not and we have to ask our boss or go to the psychologist. It’s this lack of sincerity that throws us into confusion. This is why the first day I said what Fr. Giussani says on affection for oneself; when you have this affection for yourself, that is, this seriousness with your own needs, with your own exigencies, then you possess within yourself the criterion of judgment for seeing what satisfies you. But here too we can reduce, because many times we identify those needs with images. This is why Fr. Giussani always said (and now we understand this better within the work we’re doing) that in order to recognize truly human needs (without reductions) we have to be simple of heart. Affection for oneself demands poverty, poverty in spirit. Affection for oneself leads us back to the rediscovery of the constitutive exigencies, the original needs in their nakedness and vastness. When you’re poor in spirit, what do you discover within? An endless expectant awaiting, to the point that—as he says, quoting Clemente Rebora—you aren’t waiting for anyone, because you know perfectly well that nothing is sufficient (although this doesn’t mean that you disengage!), and yet you’re there, entirely outstretched, intent—that is, you don’t succumb, you don’t identify your being outstretched and intent with an image that should realize it (this is idolatry). The temptation of idolatry is to identify what we mysteriously desire—the Mystery—with the idol. Fr. Giussani clarifies: “Imagine, on that meadow, a man who is poor in spirit, sitting there with his legs spread out, face up looking at the sky; looking at the land, the mountains, and everything, with this total dilation of the heart, without him fixing in his mind’s eye, ‘Here, I’d like a roof. I’d like a house. I’d like a wife. I’d like children. I’d like money.’ Nothing! There’s nothing! This is the originality of man. In fact, the originality of man is the expectant awaiting for the infinite. [...] As we’ve observed, it’s like this for the need for love. It’s like this for the need for truth. It’s like this for the need for possession. It’s like this for the need for the nexus with reality.”¹⁸

Now, you tell me if the way we speak of correspondence, sat-

isfaction, has anything to do with this. Let's stop kidding ourselves, because this is what blocks us from acknowledging the diversity of Christ. If just any old thing corresponds to us, what are we doing here? If we can get by fine with just any old thing, with any image, why do we need faith? Why isn't just a healing enough, as happened for the nine lepers in the parable? Why? Why isn't the fruit of Christianity enough, being together in a beautiful companionship? Why isn't it enough? Why can't faith be optional? Precisely for this reason: because the originality of man is the expectant awaiting for the infinite.

As it says in School of Community, only a humanity like this, when it finds something exceptional, realizes that that exceptional thing able to satisfy and magnetize his entire "I" is the synonym of the divine. For this reason, faith gives an entirely different satisfaction, which we can find in experience. Why? Because, as Fr. Giussani says, the attraction Jesus exercised on others, that is, the attraction He awakens in us when we encounter Him, was due to the fact that the ultimate point of reference wasn't Him, but the Father; He attracted to Himself in order to lead to the Father, to open us wide to the Mystery, the only One able to correspond. We find ourselves with this unique correspondence of the faith precisely because we encounter something real and present that satisfies us because within there is Something that opens us wide to the infinite, and we find a correspondence that we call impossible.

It is He who fulfills the nature of my "I," which is desire for the infinite. All our attempts to reduce the sign as if it didn't have the Mystery within, all our staying together without the Mystery within, cannot seize hold of us. Because if it is not like Jesus, who, staying with us, opens us wide to the Mystery, then it doesn't correspond; it doesn't satisfy. This is why faith can't be optional. To use a beautiful expression of Fr. Giussani, the only thing that corresponds is a real and mysterious You. The object of faith is this real and mysterious You. This is what we're invited to, nothing less than this. Something less than this wouldn't make faith so reasonable as to take up the whole "I" and demand the whole "I," because never, as in this relationship with the real and mysterious You, has my life acquired an import, a knowledge, an experience that nothing else can give.

Going over these things is first of all a personal work, because,

as you see, each of us is on the line. Nobody can do for us this personal work (not individualistic, because we do it accompanying each other), that is, be careful not to act as mediators: “friends, that is, witnesses,” not accomplices. If we try to reduce the import of the challenge, we’re delinquents instead of friends. Christ calls each of us by name, so that each one of us may feel in his depths the need of satisfaction, of fullness of life. This is why our staying together is to help us in this, and we use it as a help, not for another purpose.

*Saturday morning
August 23, 2008*

SYNTHESIS

Julián Carrón

We began the work of these days starting from Fr. Giussani's provocation that we addressed at the Fraternity Exercises: the denial of the fact that God is all in all is an irreligiosity that begins, without anyone realizing it, with a separation between God as origin of life, origin and meaning of life, and God as a product of thought. That is, what we often think about God has nothing to do with what He is, with experience as the point of departure, and this happens without anyone realizing it. Why does this happen? The substance of the question is clarified in the battle that develops between the ways of understanding the relationship of reason and experience. In these days, we've had an experience together: let's look at experience together to help each other establish a true relationship between reason and experience. Let's look at experience, trying to grasp it with our full reason.

1. Affection for oneself

Each of us has come here in a given situation (many of you have told me this; each one of you can recall this), and the first thing that happened is that we were immediately blown over by a gaze full of affection, that facilitated our looking at and acknowledging our own "I" with all its needs. Let's look once again at the absolutely moving way that Fr. Giussani speaks of this affection for oneself. "In affection for yourself, attachment to yourself, original, there is the affir-

mation of the surprise of not being made by yourself.”¹⁹ In Fr. Giussani, we find a gaze able to wonder at this thing that is the “I.” This affection for yourself is measured in the seriousness of the gaze at your own needs. We see he has this affection for us because he has greater awareness of our need, more than we ourselves, and for this reason we feel liberated in this embrace. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice,”²⁰ who acknowledge they have this hunger and this thirst, because, since affection for myself is the rediscovery of these exigencies that constitute me, of these original needs in their nakedness and vastness, all the poverty in spirit is needed to acknowledge my “I” without reducing it to my own interpretation, my culture, my measure.

We need someone who looks at us this way, because, since all of us live within history, we usually look at ourselves through the measure of the culture we live in, which in and of itself is reductive. For this reason, friends, let’s not take for granted even one line of what we’re saying here, because the fact of finding a page like this of Fr. Giussani’s that looks at us this way, is a sign of the other world in this world. He’s not a sentimentalist, someone with a somewhat superior humanity. No! This wouldn’t be possible, especially since he, belonging to the same culture, would be reduced and incapable of looking this way, if it weren’t for another thing vibrating within him. At times we don’t seem to realize that looking in this way demands that the Word be made flesh and dwell among us: dwell now, because this gaze isn’t just in the Gospel, but in Someone who is looking this way now!

Fr. Giussani testifies to this poverty of spirit that can acknowledge this endless expectant awaiting, this boundless expectation. “Affection for oneself leads us to rediscover the constitutive exigencies, the original needs, in their nakedness and vastness. [...] It’s not a boundless expectant awaiting because the heap of things expected is endless [don’t misunderstand this: it’s not that you have an interminable list of expectations to evade]; no, you don’t expect anything, but live a boundless openness. [...] As the poet Rebora says, “I’m not waiting for anyone...” and yet, you’re there, entirely outstretched, intent”²¹—it’s a masterful formula for defining this boundless expectation.

This is the originality of man. The originality of man is the expectant awaiting for the infinite. This poverty is required in order to acknowledge that everything I hope for isn’t reduced to my images, the images that today’s mentality, my culture, advertising, pump into my head. This demands poverty of spirit, which can come forth only in the encounter with such a gaze, giving me the courage

to look at all my need; otherwise, I'll be frightened and reduce it. "Seriousness in affection for yourself is the perception of your own boundless need [...]. It's boundless precisely because you don't prefix any image of things you need: It *is* need! [...] Kids, the most serious thing in the world and life is you, your person."²² I *am* this need: I don't "have needs. I am this need. I am this boundless expectant awaiting; I am this expectation of the infinite; I am this.

Those with this poverty can have an attachment full of esteem and full of compassion and mercy for themselves. But I ask you: how often do people have a gaze like this for themselves? When was the last time a person had an instant of tenderness like this for himself or herself? I challenge you: where can you find a gaze like this? Why did I continually return to read the pages of Fr. Giussani? Because I couldn't find this gaze anywhere else. Do you understand? It's not that I'm stupid or that I don't have anything better to do. Where could I encounter a gaze able to embrace all my humanity like this?

Without a bit of this attachment to our humanity, we lack the ground upon which to build the rest. Why does Fr. Giussani do this? In doing this, what is burning? Two thousand years are burnt. It's not Fr. Giussani's choice; it's Christ's choice. "Jesus said to them in reply, 'Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners.'"²³ But this is happening now. He's looking at me this way now. He came and comes for us poor wretches, now.

How does He respond to this "being need" of ours? How do we know that He hasn't abandoned us and that He continues to have this mercy on us? The point of departure isn't, can't be, an imagination, a sentiment, a deduction, but facts, reality. The point of departure is attachment to reality, to something real, so much so—and we know well, observing ourselves—that those who don't find something real don't look at themselves this way.

2. Facts

Therefore—and this is the second passage—we have to look at the facts through which He responds. What facts? Looking at facts is a method, a method that Fr. Giussani didn't invent. It's a method that Fr. Giussani learned from the normal way of relating with reality, but for which we find the purest testimony in Jesus: "Look at the

birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them.”²⁴ What’s He talking about? Where does He start from? From looking at birds. But He can’t look at birds without ending up speaking of the Father. He wants to make us learn a gaze that doesn’t stop at appearances, but goes all the way to the origin, to the Father, from whom reality constantly arises: birds. “Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life span?”²⁵ It is a gaze that makes us ask. Do you give yourself life? You can’t even add an instant to your life! Who is giving it to you right now? What is Jesus’ point of departure? The life that we acknowledge now. “Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field [it’s God who so clothes the grass of the field!], which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will He not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?”²⁶ You of little faith: people who don’t look at reality all the way to its source, who don’t understand that everything happening now (from birds, to grass, to “I”) is all generated, sustained, originated in this instant by a Father. Thus, what I have to account for is reality: what exists, not what I imagine, feel, or experience... What exists: birds, grass, “I.” You start out from reality. As Andrej Sinjavskij said, “You needn’t believe out of tradition, fear of death, or for safety’s sake. Or because there’s someone who commands you to and induces fear, or yet again for humanistic reasons, to save yourself, to act in a special way. You need to believe for the simple reason that God exists,”²⁷ as all of reality cries out. This is why Feuerbach is wrong: we don’t believe for humanistic reasons or because we’re afraid. We believe because God exists.

This dynamic that we see in Jesus, and that Fr. Giussani taught us, is the same that we’ve seen in these days. What are “the birds” in the facts we’ve seen this year? Let’s look together at the facts. You’ve all seen them: the Zerbinis, Rose and her women, Andrea Anziani, and each of us can add to the long chain of facts we have in our eyes from these days. No imagination—for goodness sake, let’s be serious. Don’t dare reduce the facts to sentiments or interpretations we have to look at the facts! Because if we’re not sincere in looking at the facts, you have the beginning of this terrible separation between reason and experience that is the beginning of dualism, by which adherence to faith isn’t reasonable—understand?—even if we repeat the words “God” or “Our

Lady.” It’s not reasonable because it’s separated from the facts. But the issue is that the first separation, the first immorality, is already in the way we describe reality, with which we look at it, so much so that many times we don’t even realize what’s there.

But now I wonder: we’ve all been before these facts and many others that I won’t take the time to list now. Good. In how many of us has the journey of knowledge been set into motion these days? Don’t repeat back to me the discourse on the journey of knowledge. I already know that you all understand it. I take it for granted. But in front of these facts, in how many of you has a journey of knowledge been set into motion? We’ve said, “Beautiful! Beautiful!” and everything ended there, and then we went to Mass and prayed Lauds. But in these days, in how many of us has the victory over separation and dualism been set into motion? If it’s not this way, we can have had a great time, enjoyed stupendous days, but we’ll leave defeated: tomorrow morning we’ll get up saying, “We’re alone.”

If the sign is so unmistakable and the facts so irresistible and imposing, why is it hard for this journey of knowledge to be set into motion? Fr. Giussani explains that these facts are to be read with the heart and that the heart, in order to avoid sentimental reductions of this word, is reason engaged with affection (“The heart—as reason and affectivity—is the condition for the healthy actuation of reason”²⁸). What does it mean to say that this reason is affectively engaged? That our reason has been seized. This is why there’s no reason without affection. We’ve been in front of a fact that has seized us and set into motion all our demand for understanding the meaning, for comprehending deep down what we’re seeing. What does this depend on? The human element. If the human element is missing in us, we lack the ground on which to build. If we’ve said, “Beautiful! Beautiful!” and the journey of knowledge hasn’t been set into motion in us, if we’ve been comfortable here, everybody happy, but this hasn’t been set into motion in us, it’s a misfortune, because all the greater is the reason that tomorrow, when everything is over, it will generate in us an infinite sadness, because without hunger and without thirst, the dynamic of knowledge isn’t set into motion.

Here you understand that the need doesn’t invent the Presence, but enables us to know It, to acknowledge It, and you also understand that the true problem of knowledge isn’t intelligence. “The heart of the human problem of knowledge doesn’t lie in a partic-

ular capacity of intelligence. [...] The center of the problem is really in a right position of the heart.”²⁹ Poverty in spirit is the right position of the heart. This is why precedence is given not to those who are more intelligent, but to those who are simple, precisely because of the overturning of method that the fact of the Incarnation has introduced into history. An overturning, and yet we can be here with all our intelligence and try to put it in a box. This is a waste of time, among other things, because you lose what’s happening in front of you, which is the modality by which He comes to you to respond to your need.

Deep down, we think comparing facts with the heart is something convoluted, a contrived thing, for people who complicate their lives, and that this journey of knowledge is something for those who have time. We hold that knowledge should be automatic, spontaneous, and that there’s no need to do this work. As soon as we hear the word “work,” we’re suspicious and let it slip. Very good. Good for you! It’s as if the following conviction was dominant in us: in order to be true knowledge, I shouldn’t be there. Why? Because of the incidence in us of the dominant mentality, the philosophical mentality according to which knowledge is true, certain, guaranteed, and objective when the subject doesn’t interfere, when the heft of the subject isn’t required—otherwise, it’s suspect, as seen in the hypothesis of self-convincing. Not that I do a work to acknowledge the full import of the facts all the way to their meaning; I think that it’s such a convoluted thing that I convince myself. I’ve heard it from everyone, as I’ve said so many times in these months of work on faith. No, no, and no! It is the suspicion that the only true, objective knowledge is that in which the “I” does not interfere, does not participate, which is the claim of scientific knowledge to be the only kind of knowledge. This is why the Pope has undertaken a battle against it. Do we acknowledge scientific knowledge to be the only real, objective knowledge? Either we broaden reason, or, inexorably, we’ll cast out Mystery from reality, and then we don’t know what to do, and speak of the Mystery sentimentally or intimistically. The journey of knowledge is needed.

If we don’t walk the journey of knowledge in all its passages, when we speak of faith we’ll do so irrationally, with a separation between reason and experience.

We can even repeat the whole discourse we’ve said on faith, but then in these days—which should be a great help—we can continue being lazy, without discovering the meaning, without a personal

step. The beginning of that journey of knowledge called faith, the beginning of the walk of certainty is this happening before our eyes of something supremely desirable, that seemed impossible; it's a humanity with irresistible features, a difference that attracts. You find someone with a gaze on life that restores your breath, with a way of entering into relationship with everything so that nothing's banal, everything has the weight of the eternal—you find an Andrea, a Rose, or a Cleuza. You can't explain what you see without implicating another factor, and you can't resist without asking, "Why in the world? Why is this different? How can it be this way?" And thus, this desire is set into motion: "I too want to be this way," almost ashamed to confess it to ourselves. If you're sincere deep down, you can't fail to be led to the threshold of needing to implicate something Other in what you see.

3. Acknowledging His presence

Now the third passage. Who of us has arrived at acknowledging this other factor, this Presence that made different those whom we've seen with our eyes (not through the eyes of others or someone who told me about it, but with our own eyes)?

If you don't reach this point, you're unable to give adequate reasons for the facts and you stay with appearances. First, it's unreasonable because you stop before giving reasons for the facts. Second, your need, your hunger finds no answer. Above all, third, you remain in the most total solitude, even being together, because solitude is being separated from meaning. True solitude is powerlessness, and He responds to this solitude, this powerlessness, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."³⁰ Thus, if I don't come to the point of acknowledging this, I'm alone, because only a Presence responds to solitude, and we can live the paradox of being together and alone, because it's not just being together (a lot of people are together), but it's the way we are together, the consciousness with which we're together, the acknowledgment of something Other that makes us stay together in a different way. Therefore, only Christ responds to true solitude and, therefore, faith isn't optional—it's either Christ or nothingness.

How can someone feel alone after such a superabundance of facts? Through failing to acknowledge Him who is among us, who is the origin of these facts, of this impossible thing we have touched with our

hand. Why is it this way? Let's be careful, again, because this acknowledgment isn't automatic; it necessarily implicates my freedom. Many people have seen the facts. Many people have seen the miracles. Many people have witnessed those facts and haven't adhered and have remained alone with their powerlessness. It isn't enough; it isn't automatic. Nothing is automatic in man, thank God! This is freedom. Once again, the "I" is necessary. Because from this acknowledgment of the "I," from the acknowledgment of this other factor, the question arises again: "Who is this man?"³¹ Reason feels challenged again.

4. Who is this man?

And here we find ourselves before another difficulty. How many times have we heard among ourselves, "I acknowledge these facts, but I have difficulty saying His name." How can we acknowledge who He is today? How do we answer this question in a reasonable way? Again, there's no other road than attentive and passionate observation of reality; that is, of facts. And what do we observe? What have we observed in these facts? What unmistakable features have we observed in these facts? When we said, "I've never seen anything like it," we said it before someone present: it was that person there, with these unmistakable features, human as human can be, full of flesh, bone, gaze, but that thing we saw in that gaze full of flesh and bone were the unmistakable features of His presence. These features were the tenderness full of compassion with which we have been looked at, or the mercy with which we have been embraced, or the way we've been told, and re-told, with a total movement of heart, "Woman, don't cry," or how we've heard the "Yes" of Peter described: a man who is present, with a face, with a humanity. And how we've seen shining in Vicky's face all the clarity about the meaning of living! Those who acknowledge this find themselves within a companionship that is a true answer to solitude. Now, all these feature we've seen, whose are they? The most imposing thing is that this makes me discover in all circumstances that the encounter with this factor makes me perceive each thing as a sign.

All week, we've heard the prayer from the Mass that Fr. Giussani commented on many times in a unique way, "We ask you, Lord, that, in loving You in every thing and above every thing, we may obtain the good things You have promised, which exceed every desire." This prayer condenses the entire dynamic of the Christian life: before our-

selves, therefore before our own destiny, because man is his destiny; before others, because man is the love that he brings to others; it is the affection he lives, according to its whole possible range, from ardent preference to hatred; it is before all things. This prayer describes the Christian dynamic of the relationship with reality, which begins with self, from consciousness of one's destiny, through all the affectivity that in various ways is placed on the face of and presence of others, and penetrates all things." And look at what it says: "Loving You *in every thing*"—not a hair of your head is excluded. The purity that Christ brought into the world, that He brings into our day as soon as we awaken, is a love for each thing." Who is this man who introduces a love of each thing without eluding or omitting anything? "Loving you in each thing and *above* every thing"—this 'above' is the opposite of above; it's a *within* each thing, in such a way that the thing is loved to the point of arriving at Christ. For example, if a man loves a woman without arriving at You, O Christ, he doesn't love her, and his impetus corrupts; it's already corrupt at the beginning. If a man is passionate about his work and doesn't penetrate the object and the modality of his work to the point of reaching the presentiment of Your perfect face, which awaits us [...] to the last surge of the oars to go to the other shore, if he loves the things he uses in his work without seeking to glimpse Your face in them, he brings to the oppression of the world one more lie, even were he to win the Nobel Prize."³²

5. A Presence with unmistakable features

These unmistakable features—whose are they? I don't know. Nobody can know by himself. This is why so often people can't manage to say His name. As we said in the Exercises, the answer to the question, "Who is this man?" is given by Him. Who tells us this? Whose are these features? Where do we find these features? I ask you: Where do you find these features? Where can we encounter them? In the testimony that has remained as canon in the Gospel. We know that these unmistakable features are Christ's because they're the same unmistakable features we find in the Gospel, of a man called Jesus of Nazareth. The tradition of the Church is what allows us to experience these unmistakable features. She has you read the Gospel so you understand whose these unmistakable features are. Years ago, a person in a parish near Madrid told me this.

He hadn't been a Church-goer before meeting the Movement. He discovered these unmistakable features in the Christian friends he'd encountered, and then when he began going to Mass and heard the Gospel, he said, "These people in the Gospel experienced what happens to us!" and he didn't understand that it was the opposite! That we experience what happened to the people in the Gospel! He could identify what he saw, hearing the story of the same facts, not just a memory of the past, but facts with the faces of concrete people, yet with these absolutely unmistakable features.

This is why Fr. Giussani always immersed himself in the Gospels, and why he introduced us to this immersion in them. Now we almost think it's a spiritualistic waste of time, but we'd never have heard one speak this way, we'd never have felt looked at this way, with the "Woman, don't weep!" or the "Yes" of Peter, if Fr. Giussani hadn't lived for years this immersion in this figure marked by unmistakable features, who is Jesus. This is the way He works, the way grace works; faith is born like a flower of grace, at the ultimate apex of reason.

6. The test of faith: satisfaction

The last point, and I'll just touch upon it. You can see whether we've walked this journey together by the test of faith as satisfaction. Don't waste time on other considerations: you see the journey just looking at this, and since we're not idiots, we know when we're satisfied and when we're not. We don't have to ask anybody to understand whether the shoe we're wearing fits or not. It's enough to look at what's happened. You see whether we've walked the journey of experience by the satisfaction. Fr. Giussani concluded his commentary on this prayer of the Liturgy saying, "May we obtain the good things You have promised, which exceed every desire.' These good things promised, that exceed every desire, are not at the end if they're not already within life. Satisfaction is now. "Loving You in every thing, that is, loving every thing to the point of arriving at perceiving, foretasting, touching in the darkness Your face [Your with a capital Y], the good we want for the beloved, for ourselves, for work, for things, the world, exceeds all our desires." [...] Loving Christ within each thing," he continues, "not stopping at appearances, but passing over to the other shore of each thing, which is Him [this is faith], we begin to live the promise He made us, that is,

we may obtain the good things He promised, which exceed every desire,” because the desire is for You, Christ, in every thing and with-in every thing. “Those who love father or mother more than me aren’t worthy of me. But those who abandon father, mother, brother, sister for my sake...will have a hundredfold...’—that is, they’ll love themselves and their poverty a hundred times more; they’ll embrace their misery with mercy a hundred times more; they’ll desire, aspire, walk a hundred times more impetuously toward their destiny. To love your woman or man, companion or stranger, a hundred times more; to love the things at your hands a hundred times more; to forgive yourself, your neighbor, everyone everything, a hundred times more; to embrace the world a hundred times more, to penetrate everything a hundred times more: this has been given to us, because He didn’t equivocate, incriminate, but He saved the world.³³

Each of us can judge what has happened. This is not to be moralistic, not to return to saying, “We are unworthy,” but to understand that if we haven’t reached this point, the problem isn’t that we’re unworthy, but that we haven’t done the journey of faith, because without faith, there isn’t this satisfaction. We needn’t get angry with life or with others. It’s just that we’re not spared this journey, which we do together, but which is nonetheless a personal journey. For this reason, even the last remaining discomfort can become the point of departure for making this journey. Who can do it? Only those with an ultimate affection for self. Faith is the ultimate expression of an affection for oneself, a love for oneself. Those who stop early, or remain just with appearances, in the final analysis don’t love themselves. It’s like resistance out of self-hatred.

This is why Fr. Giussani says, “If the Movement isn’t an adventure for yourself and isn’t the phenomenon of a broadening of the heart, then it becomes the party [...], that can be overburdened with projects, but in which the individual person is destined to remain ever more tragically alone and individualistically defined.”³⁴ If we want to be in reality like people without a homeland, it will be possible only having this experience of living. Otherwise, like everyone else, we’ll look for a place in the sun.

Notes

- ¹ *Heb* 12:1–2.
- ² L. Giussani, *Uomini senza patria* (1982–1983) [*Men Without a Homeland*], Bur, Milan, 2008.
- ³ “This Is the Victory that Conquers the World, Our Faith,” Exercises of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation, 2008, supplement to *Litterae Communionis-Traces*, Vol. 10, No. 6, 2008.
- ⁴ L. Giussani, *Uomini senza patria*, op. cit., pp. 294–295.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 295.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 297–298.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 298.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 299.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 291.
- ¹¹ Offertory Prayer of the 20th week (A) of Ordinary Time.
- ¹² *Ps* 84:3.
- ¹³ This refers to the text, L. Giussani, *Is It Possible to Live This Way?*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, 2008.
- ¹⁴ This refers to the text, L. Giussani, *Is It Possible to Live This Way?*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, 2008.
- ¹⁵ L. Giussani, *The Religious Sense*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, 1997, p. 110.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- ¹⁷ Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*, Introduction, 1.
- ¹⁸ L. Giussani, *Uomini senza patria*, op. cit., pp. 298–299.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 294.
- ²⁰ *Mt* 5:6.
- ²¹ L. Giussani, *Uomini senza patria*, op. cit., pp. 297–298.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 299–300.
- ²³ *Lk* 5:31–32.
- ²⁴ *Mt* 6:26.
- ²⁵ *Mt* 6:27.
- ²⁶ *Mt* 6:28–30.
- ²⁷ A. Sinjavskij, *Pensieri improvvisi* (*Sudden Thoughts*), Jaca Book, Milan, 1978, p. 75.
- ²⁸ L. Giussani, *L'uomo e il suo destino* (*Man and His Destiny*), Marietti, Genoa, 1999, p. 117.
- ²⁹ L. Giussani, *The Religious Sense*, op. cit., pp. 40–41.
- ³⁰ *Mt* 14:27.
- ³¹ *Mk* 4:41.
- ³² L. Giussani, *Un avvenimento di vita, cioè una storia* [*An Event of Life, that is, a History*], Edit. – *Il Sabato*, Rome, 1993, p. 303.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 304.
- ³⁴ L. Giussani, *Uomini senza patria*, op. cit., p. 204.

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