

VIII

I would like to end by suggesting two forms of prayer that are more classically Christian. But not without before emphasizing that these prayers are certainly not more Christian than the former ones, where it is true that Jesus has not been named, God very slightly and my life as a man very much so. A life, however, which wouldn't be mine if I had not struggled all through these years to become a disciple.

– Father,
may your being be fulfilled
and, weak as we are,
may we be in ourselves
like You, one,
for then we shall be one in You.

Grant us the gift to believe in our neighbour
just as You believe in us,
as well as the capacity to accompany him on his journey
just as You accompany us on our own.

Help him to draw good
from the evil we have done him
– often unwittingly, inevitably sometimes –
so that he may amend it
and can absolve us
just as You transform for us
the evil we have committed,

the evil we have suffered,
for these we bless You.

Inspire in us an understanding of events,
even of those most painful,
so as to make them our own good.

May they lead us
to an understanding of our human condition
and bring us closer to the boundaries of life,
to the threshold of the absolute,
on the edge of nothing.

May they sharpen our faith
if they destroy our belief!

May they pierce our heart
and seal our lips
but leave us our hope!

– Jesus,
righteous man, Saint of God,
son of man, ferment of man,
calling of God, son of God.
Sole Master, only Lord,
our Father in this world.

Sign, because of what you have been,
of the unthinkable God
and of man in his fulfilment,
for those who welcome you.

Throughout twenty centuries and all the distance
that separate us from you,
by the vigour your memory instils in us,
be the revelation of who we are to ourselves,
be the active presence which makes our lives human,
be the path leading to our being and to God.

Despite living
locked up in indifference,
deprived of intelligence,
victims of scepticism,
fooled by scientism,
intoxicated by beautiful doctrines,
distracted by activism,
paralyzed by a religion of habits,
stranded by sentimental or cerebral piety,
seduced by social or political ideology,

Do not leave us in ignorance
of who you really were.

Let the knowledge of who you were
grow in us
so that, on our part,
we may come closer to you.

– Hail Mary,
daughter of Israel, mother of Jesus,
through your journey from law to faith
beside your son,
and through your journey of faith lived in hope

after his death,
inspire our steps and our fidelity.

You have come to your fulfilment
in your motherhood by forever being his mother,

We shall achieve the fulfilment
of our humanity by becoming his disciples.

– May the saints of past centuries,
through their lives which we have so esteemed,
through what knowledge of them we have received
and through what we have self-appropriated of their
[expression,
help us gain access to discipleship.

– May we enable the treasure of love, their legacy,
to bear fruit.

– May the Church, through our behalf be worthy
of the mad hope that Jesus inaugurated,
from which he lived and for which he died.
Amen.