

THE REIGN OF JUSTICE

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The true meaning of the verb “to live”

WHEN man is in perfect health, he is only too glad to be alive. Everything that appears to threaten his life, is painful to him, and he does his best to get rid of it.

Truth to tell, these two things: “to live” and “to have enjoyment”, get mixed up in the minds of mankind, and that is often fatal to them. They seek, in every way they can, to obtain enjoyment of such things which often shorten their lives. The fact is that, to many people, enjoyment is life.

It is only when he is laid up, when his organism refuses to render him the services he requires of it, that man begins to perceive the difference between life and enjoyment. At that instant, he becomes aware of the fact that it is only in so far as his body works properly, that it is good to be alive.

When a man is ill in bed, and the tastiest food ceases to have any attraction for him, he begins to think. Then, he thinks, with longing, of the good times he has had, when his organism used to perform all the tasks he asked of it, to be able to enjoy life according to his own ideas.

When death appears to be coming closer by leaps and bounds, man is deeply grieved, and he laments over his fate. He then seeks assistance in all directions, but cannot find the happy solution he so passionately longs for. Yet, when he can afford it, he consults all the foremost specialists in the hope of being helped and of being able to put off the dreaded moment for as long as possible. He has glimmers of hope, first here and then there, but they fade out one after the other, leaving him in greater despair than ever, and exhausted, overburdened, and weary of everything. When he is left with his back to the wall, face to face with the inevitable, in many cases then, man resolves to seek consolation in religion. Once more, he fails to discover the support he needs, the assistance he was counting on, the consolation which his soul was longing for, and the lifting of his anxiety, his cares, and the grief that is wringing his heart.

Of course, the Gospel is wonderful consolation for everyone's heart; however, to be able to receive the consolation it holds out, you have to accept and to live up to all the conditions it proposes to mankind. The veil of darkness which, according to Bible teaching, covers all nations and is cast over all people, is torn away for all who live up to those conditions. They can

receive the consolation, the support and the blessed impressions which come from divine grace. Then, for them, the Gospel becomes that power of God which is for the Salvation of all who believe.

We are now living through a period of the history of the human race, which is the reckoning of nineteen centuries of Christianity on Earth. All that long time, the Almighty has been employing his Son in choosing a Little Flock, who is the true Church. Side by side with that small handful of faithful children of God, there has been the great mass of Christendom, Christians in name, living in a spirit wholly contrary to divine ways. They have been seeking a selfish salvation, but there is no such thing. They have lived a life of darkness without any real hope of future existence, made possible by the atoning Work of the Ransom done by our Saviour Jesus Christ and the members of his Body (the Little Flock, the Royal Priesthood). Another name that the Bible gives to that Body of people, is the Bride of Christ.

The sublime and glorious hope of the Restoration of All Things, spoken of by the Apostle Peter at Pentecost, has found no echo in general in the hearts of Christendom, whereas, to all who have purposefully accepted the conditions of the Gospel and lived up to them, it has been a wonderful consolation and an inexhaustible source of joy and of comfort.

Lately, from the book *The Message to Humanity*, mankind have received very special consolation, consolation of magnificent power. *The Message to Humanity* is the Book of Remembrance which Malachi the Prophet speaks of. The Book of Remembrance reveals to us what human life is, the way God looks at it, and the way He proposed it to mankind. That precious message and the book which is its sequel: *Eternal Life*, demonstrate to us that lasting life on Earth is quite possible to mankind, and that God is preparing, for them, a wonderful time of refreshing. Isaiah the Prophet tells us about it, saying that, on this Holy Mountain, God is preparing a feast of good food and fine wine which will be served to all the nations on Earth, and that also on this Holy Mountain, God will wipe away all tears and will destroy death forever.

They are the splendid living conditions that God is preparing for mankind. He who fulfils those conditions can truly say that he is alive, for to do that, is the only thing that can be called living. It stands to reason that one who wishes to enjoy that life, must fulfil the

conditions on which it depends. Those conditions are simply that one should lay everything selfish aside. Thus, we have glorious prospects set before everyone and to reach for.

Real life, lasting life, for mankind is subject to the principle of a threefold circulation of life. First comes the circulation of God's Holy Spirit. That Spirit induces, in man, the display of sentiments that throw the door wide open, in his organism, to the circulation of the Vital Fluid. This Vital Fluid is the supreme promoter of life. The beneficial and harmonious impressions thus made on the sensory nerves of the organism, favour an easy and abundant circulation of blood, which is the second circulation of life. Those impressions, at the same time, impart to man the wisdom needful for providing himself with the vivifying effects of pure air, which is the third circulation of life.

What is essential to mankind is to be constantly under the action of the divine Spirit. That calls for an entirely altruistic line of conduct on their part. Such a line of conduct, of course, represents the reversal of the conditions existing in the human race. For one thing, mankind are not ruled by God's Holy Spirit, they are governed by selfishness. Now, selfishness, whether practised on a small or on a large scale, is always a deadly poison. It has a disastrous effect on the human organism, and results in disharmony and loss of balance. If then human beings decide to choose life, they must rally to the altruistic principles of the Kingdom of God.

In God's Kingdom, everyone exists for the good of his fellows and of all things, and all have intercommunion. Intelligent creatures, especially mankind, must exist for one another's good. That is an essential rule and condition to have a sustained existence on Earth, without life ever being interrupted. Mankind have not lived up to that maxim, which is why they are unable to feel the influence of the Vital Fluid, God's Holy Spirit, sufficiently. So, their lives are strewn with hazards. A great number of accidents cut people's lives short at all ages, as do all kinds of ailments. There is, above all, the fact that the organism wears out: at a given moment, it is exhausted and stops working. All that is simply due to men not knowing how to behave. They have interests of their own to defend, which make them selfish. Accordingly, the Spirit of the Almighty cannot circulate freely in their organism, and there can be no true life in them. That is why they die.

The influence of God's Holy Spirit makes its presence felt in love for fellow men, in sentiments of kindness, of mercy and of all tenderness. It is translated into an

“With Thee, every day, dear Father, is a festive day!”

EUROPE, in the early 20th century: They are a big family: eleven children, of whom Lisette is the third. And although they are poor, they are a happy family, as is best seen at mealtimes when mummy's cheerful voice rings through the house: “Come on, children, dinner's ready.” Then, what a noise of scuffling feet, of chatter and of laughter, followed by the scraping of stools on the tiles of the kitchen floor. Suddenly, the children are silent as father and mother make the sign of the Cross, after which they all start eating.

Lisette, eleven years old, helps mummy clear the table when all those healthy youngsters have had their fill, and father has gone back to work. Lisette then helps mummy wash up, telling her about what has happened at school that morning. All the children have to help in one way or another, except the baby

and the toddlers. Without that help, mother would not be able to cope with all the work that such a large family entails. They all do their part, cheerfully feeling the need, in this way, to show her how grateful they are for the way she mothers them.

However, Lisette is often told: “School isn't the main thing. Something must be done to earn money for the sake of the little ones.” So, one day, she is sent to the good sisters at the convent to learn how to sew. She puts her heart into everything she does, for she loves life, being active and getting things done. Above all, she is happy when she can honestly feel that her work is well done. She attends Mass regularly, for her parents have brought her up to be a strict practising Catholic. As she walks home from the convent, she sings everything that goes through her head to tunes improvised as she goes. “There is one God above, Who reigns in Heaven with love,” is one of her favourite choruses. She

fails to understand how to reconcile that thought with the thought of the Trinity, but that is how she feels.

Her grandmother encourages her to keep to the “right way”, as she calls it. She is very pious: she rings the bells and is far busier with the church than with her grandchildren. An uncle who has attended seminary for two years, sees to their religious education.

No wonder Lisette is impressed by that mystical atmosphere. At thirteen, she feels drawn to godly things. In a sort of religious ecstasy, she goes three days without food and three nights without sleep. She expresses the wish to become a sister at the convent. She has been praying a lot and has a feeling that those impressions are the answer to her prayers. She runs to the old parish priest and tells him all about what she wants to do... He gives her a severe look, and his answer is like a cold shower thrown over her enthusiasm: “You need a lot of money to become a nun:

give up the idea at once, for your people have nothing.”

Sick at heart, Lisette returns to her stitching... She thinks: “Is that the way of religion? So, you need money to serve God?” Many more such anguishing questions, like those, crowd into her mind. But finally, her cheery dispositions win the day, and her needle once more seems to fly through her work. This work will at least be of use to those she loves, perhaps of even greater use than entering into a convent.

Her mother has often told her the story of her own younger brother who was one day bitten by a mad dog. Grandmother, in great distress, took him to town to get him vaccinated. She was given very strict instructions concerning his convalescence. However, in such large families, each person, to a great extent, has to see to himself, and the little boy fell ill again, this time without hope. He knew his case was hopeless, and he was very reason-

exemplary way of living, into affectionate zeal and into helping violators of brotherly love to amend.

It is certain that to introduce such an education into the midst of mankind, will overturn the "kingdom of darkness" at one blow. Indeed, with such a programme lived up to, the brotherhood of all nations becomes possible. In those conditions, no one any longer wants or has anything of one's own. All men joyfully come under the divine law, as children of God who live on the Almighty's good pleasure. Then, the magnificent pictures painted by the Prophets can come true. Isaiah's picture — describing the peace of the New Earth, with the lion, the cow and the bear being led by a child — can turn into a reality. It is the foretold time when the days of God's children cannot be counted, and when mankind will not have children to see them die.

Those glorious prospects are set before all men: they are the result of the atoning Work of God's dearly beloved Son. He came to die on the Cross, so that all who rally to him may live eternally on Earth. Only a Little Flock, during the time of the High Calling (the Gospel Age), is invited to lay aside its human nature and to inherit the immortality of divine nature. The Great Multitude inherits spiritual nature, and all the rest of humanity, when they return from the dead, will be able to live eternally on Earth, the Earth that becomes God's glorious footstool.

The Earth has been, and still is, a "test station" for man and his everlasting destiny. However, those glorious prospects and those living hopes for the future, are ahead of us, owing to divine grace, as realities which are no longer far off. Their fulfilment — once the Kingdom of God is set up on Earth, and the Restoration of All Things is in full swing — will permit mankind to at last be alive in the full meaning of the word. All men will then give glory to the Lord, the Almighty, Who conceived this magnificent plan of love, so that all who wish for it may achieve that real life in endless happiness and in restored Paradise.

Oil and the damage it causes

Oil (crude oil, petroleum) is a component of so many products and objects that are used daily, that it seems impossible to live without it. The Swiss *Greenpeace Magazine* No. 4-2018, from which we quote the following report, details a long and incomplete list of them. But is it known that oil, even before pollutes our surroundings with its various end products, causes enormous environmental pollution when it is extracted? To convince ourselves of that, we partly reproduce the above-mentioned report written by Romano Paganini:

... Mariana lives just outside the city of Nueva Loja, at the entrance of the Amazon Region in the northeast of the country of Ecuador in South America. Her house is set back about from the main road and on a slope, and is only about 100 metres from an oil derrick [oil-drilling tower, oil-drilling rig], from which a gas flame has been burning 24 hours a day, for 46 years. Right behind that, is a treatment plant for "formation water", the water that sprays to the surface with the oil and gas, and that is highly toxic. ...

The ground is impregnated with "the blood of the Earth"

1978: Mariana trembles. That actually never happens, because "fear" is not part of the vocabulary of this mother of four. After all, it was she who convinced her husband to move north six years ago. In the south, a never-ending drought had made the ground infertile and destroyed the existence of every farming family. And because the national government, located in the

country's capital city of Quito, wanted to secure its territory in this sparsely populated region of the Amazon from the ambitions of the adjoining country of Peru, and mainly wanted to secure its resources there, it offered land to interested settlers. Therefore, Mariana quickly packed her bags and asked her husband: "Are you coming with me?"

That was in 1972. Mariana was full of confidence.

But one morning, thick black clouds roll into the sky and rob the Sun of its radiance. It's getting dark over Mariana's house, and her children, none of them older than 12, start crying. The family flees into the centre of the brick house, and crouches on the floor. They hug, listen, tremble and wait. "Is that all?" Mariana asks herself and looks at the thatched roof. A single spark would be enough to set all their belongings on fire.

It doesn't get that far. The rain clouds behind those smoke clouds, bring rain and push that soot to the ground. Trees and plants turn black, as do swamps and rivers. The "black gold" [oil], from the belly of the Earth, impregnates the rainforest and quickly ignites another fire: the one that Mariana is animated by.

Barefoot over oil

What happened? Mariana discovers that workers for the US oil company Texaco caused the smoke clouds over her house. Instead of properly disposing of the industrial waste, it was placed in a large "catchment basin" under the open sky, and set on fire. It is easier and above all cheaper, and has become a common practice in the Amazon Region.

Texaco, a large international oil company headquartered in New York, later had to answer for those practices in court, under the new company name of Chevron (since 2001). ... No one knows whether the 9.5 billion US dollars in damages that Texaco/Chevron was recently ordered to pay by the Supreme Court of Ecuador, to restore over 2 million hectares of land, will eventually reach the 30,000 affected people. ... Since its arrival in 1964, the company has pretended that there is no danger from the industry. Without hesitation, it had its black slag [stony industrial waste product] spread on the freshly cleared roads around Nueva Loja and also on the one that connected the village of Mariana's family to the city and that became the children's way to school. They regularly came home barefoot with black soles. Because of the heat, the provisionally tarred road lost its consistency and stuck, with each step, a little more to the sandals of the students until it was only possible to continue without them. The children soon became sick and increasingly suffered from pain in the legs, head, neck and ears. Diseases appeared that the people in the region were unfamiliar with and therefore could not cure.

In the early 1970s — with the arrival of the first settlers, when the first oil-drilling towers were built in the rainforest, and when industrial waste began to be deposited in the soil and water — nobody knew exactly where those diseases came from. From the Ecuadorian government, there was no information, transparency or protection provided. Until then, six indigenous nations had lived there, isolated from Western industrial society. But from then on, "financial interests" [money] ruled in the Amazon Region. The industry not only played down the risks of oil, but even praised it as a remedy, for example, for arthritis. Individual residents went to the catchment basin and rubbed their joints with the waste stored there. "Health care" was a foreign word, and the only sickbay for miles around was operated by Texaco.

The stomach is like a sieve

The "unknown product", which was brought up from the depths of the Earth with the help of chemicals, spread like a plague and quickly poisoned the most important source of life: water. For Mariana and her family, wa-

ter mainly came from the Teteye River, where jaguars and cougars also drank. Mariana and her neighbours washed themselves and their clothes there, and they filled their bottles and pots there, and brought the water to their homes.

When the oil production increased and the water-tanker trucks became bigger and faster, the animals withdrew into the forest. However, the people stayed and boiled the water over fires to hopefully rid it of chemicals before they drank it. But the water stilled smelled mainly like diesel when it was on Mariana's dining table. Even the meat became inedible. When Mariana therefore complained to the Nueva Loja City Council and to Texaco, she was turned away. After all, she had no evidence. But she actually had plenty: all 60 pigs that the family kept, died within three days of drinking from an industrial catchment basin. When she cut open the pigs, she saw the rotten flesh. The pigs' stomachs were like a sieve. ...

Final storage underground

In order to better understand the process of oil extraction and the associated threat to nature, we briefly listen to an oil engineer who teaches at a private university in Quito: "To get the oil out of the ground, a hole is drilled, into which chemicals are injected, among them, the carcinogenic 'benzene'. The chemicals ensure that the corrosive formation water — which is usually hundreds, if not thousands, of metres deep in the ground together with the oil, and which provides the necessary pressure with the gas — does not damage the industrial equipment. Once on the surface, heat is used to separate the water from the oil, and the oil ends up in a sealed tank. The oil is pumped to a refinery through a pipeline, and the gas is either used, burned or pumped back into the ground.

Something similar happens to the water: it either ends up back where it came from, so that the pressure in the ground increases further and the oil deposits in the borehole are exhausted — or machines pump it 1,000 to 1,500 metres below the ground, where it is fed into a layer of sandy earth for final storage."

The perfect vicious circle

So much for the theory. The practice in the 20th century was different and varied depending on the means, the world region and the interests. In Ecuador, the highly toxic water has been channelled into the swamps and waters of the Amazon Region for decades, including the Teteye region, where Mariana and her family live. Nobody cared about that in the 1970s and 1980s. Mariana organized herself with other women, presented herself to the ministries in Quito, and complained to the oil companies. But the residents around Nueva Loja were increasingly dependent on the industry. The settlers who had hoped for a better life in the Amazon Region, became cheap labour and sick people. They helped clear the rainforest, set up new oil-drilling rigs and maintained the machinery, and thereby financed their families' visits to the doctor at Texaco — it was the perfect vicious circle.

You hardly hear about any of that in Central Europe. The oil is only refined here and then sold to end users... For the oil used in Switzerland, the pollution produced from its extraction occurs in the countries of Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

The industrial society of the 19th century changed into a service society during the 20th century. The exploitation, production and transportation of raw materials is financed and controlled, but no one takes responsibility for those activities. Because of the "sweeteners" that are added to petrol, motorists do not realize that petroleum actually has an extremely nasty smell. Everything runs like clockwork. And while "black gold" is flooding our Blue Planet, the understanding that "industrialization always means pollution" is not clear to people. Europe

able about it. Very calmly, he asked his family to fetch the village priest, for he knew he was going to die. "He must administer Holy Communion to me before I die," he said. They had to beg the churchman to come, who finally, with great reluctance, permitted himself to be persuaded: he was afraid the child would bite him. The lad felt that and attempted to reassure him: "I won't bite you, minister!" The priest took the Host, pricked it on to a fork, and held it out at arm's-length to the dying child, who very soon thereafter breathed his last.

Lisette often thinks about that incident, which always makes a strange impression on her. To her mind, a priest is somebody who does not fear for his life and who gives himself up to his ministry in every circumstance. She thinks: "What about that then?" That is another question mark to which no one will ever give her an answer. Truly, everything concerning religion is a great mystery.

In 1914, in World War One, tragedy becomes the guest in every home: the alarm is sounded, and every man is summoned to the battlefield. Father has to go, leaving his wife in despair with seven children still at home and to be provided for. Lisette is in tears, and thinks: "Why does the good God permit us to be in such trouble?"

She must help her mother financially. So, she goes to work for a chemist, running his errands and doing his housework for a miserable wage.

The young girl has an uncle in Paris, and she writes to him, asking him to find her a better paid job. He answers: "Remember that you will have to stick to that job, for a rolling stone gathers no moss." He obtains employment for her in the home of a high-ranking nobleman and his wife who have two children and a third one on the way. The young lady has made enquiries about Lisette and has been told that she is hard working

and very courageous, but bad tempered, to which she responded: "I don't mind much about her temper as long as she looks after my children properly."

Happy days have opened up for Lisette. Her employers are very kind and also very pious. Their whole life is regulated by the duties imposed by their church. They are forever praying. In winter, they leave the castle to go and stay by the seaside. With the coming of spring, they travel from one residence to another: two months here and another month there. They visit all the shrines in the land, and go on pilgrimages...

Lisette is able to send money home, which is the important thing to her. The most difficult part of her job is to put up with the dispositions of the male servants. She is the youngest in that household, and she frequently prays to God to keep her from that brusqueness, that vulgarity and all those harmful impressions. But her generous heart is also moved

to compassion by the fate of all those people in service, in many cases, cast very early in life into these situations without a guide or without anybody to lean on. She makes a resolution to never send any of her own children into service.

Lisette has reached the age of twenty. She cannot make up her mind whether she wants to get married or not. She goes to Lourdes to try to get to understand the way the Virgin Mary looks at things, for she holds her in deep reverence. She would not like to be in danger of going to Hell for having gone contrary to her ideas. However, she gets no sign... She waits a little longer and finally marries a kind man. He is a carpenter by trade, and a friend of her father. The young man possesses a golden voice and often sings in church. When listening to him at such moments, Lisette feels that she is no longer standing on Earth.

is developing into an island of cleanliness, into a single large "gated community" north of Africa.

We are responsible

The curve of oil consumption has increased steeply since 1945. The industry has managed to refine the raw material to such an extent that it is an integral part of our everyday life: shampoo, detergent, soap, hairspray, toothbrushes, seats, floors, tubs, sheets, mattresses, credit cards, computer chassis (cases), paint, packaging, window frames, petroleum jelly, and pesticides, and that is just a small extract from the list of products that contain oil. And one could actually also add oil to the list of drugs that includes alcohol, cocaine and heroin. We are extremely dependent on oil, even if we are not always aware about it. Quitting oil "cold turkey" would cause our everyday life to collapse within a very short time. ...

It is easy to find out how much oil we have extracted, processed and put into the atmosphere, through emissions, in the last 100 years. And whoever has a minimum of common sense, realizes that we humans are responsible for the current environmental imbalance of the planet. Whether we call it "climate change" or something else, we are dealing with a term that gives "the inconceivable" a name.

That actually concerns "the inconceivable"! Oil, together with the invention of the combustion engine, was a basis of the Second Industrial Revolution, which began about year 1870. Our modern society is unimaginable without oil. What shocks us in the above report is the way that it is extracted: without precautionary measures or concern for the people who live in the places where this raw material is exploited. It could also be done differently and cause less environmental damage, but that would be more expensive and reduce the yield and therefore the profit from the sale. In clear terms, it is preferable to earn more and to sacrifice human life and the natural environment, rather than to consider losing money and to care about our fellow people, who are our brothers and sisters!

Just like coal was a hundred years ago, now, oil has become a public poison. It is not talked about in the West. We are far from knowing about the daily life of people who live in the places where the most important raw material for our society is extracted. Our comfort costs those people a lot. But do we have the right to ignore these facts that are a harsh reality for those who have to deal with them every day?

The environment also pays a high price for the use of oil, which already pollutes during extraction and also as an end product, be it as fuel or as a derivative. Plastic is one of the main derivatives of oil and nowadays represents a worldwide problem because it causes massive pollution of the oceans and does harm to the animals that live in them.

One can rightly ask oneself this question: "Does oil bring us more benefits than it costs the health of humankind and the well-being of nature?" Human wisdom cannot answer that question. It is far too busy with considerations such as production, efficiency, performance and profitability, to consider the health and well-being of humankind, or to care about nature.

We think the opposite. Instead of sacrificing the lives of our fellow people and nature for profit, we should care about others and the Earth, even if it means the possible loss of financial advantages. That would mean to put the wonderful Universal Law into practice, according to which, every being and every thing in Heaven and on Earth, exist for the good of others, and all have communion with each other. That law will be respected by everyone in the Kingdom of God that will soon be established on Earth, as the equivalent of the Sacrifice of our dear Saviour and of his little Church. Then, there will be no more dominators and also no more poor who suffer under the yoke of the selfishness of those who oppress them. All humankind will become brothers and

sisters, and tenderly love each other. They will also live eternally and give glory, throughout the coming ages, to the Lord God and to our dear Saviour, the Author of our Salvation.

What does the future of the current world look like?

From the French newspaper *Ouest-France* on the 6th of April 2019, we quote the thoughts of the French sociologist Jean-Claude Kaufmann on the state of our society, which is not good, as we can see. His analysis seems pertinent and interesting, and we reproduce it in its entirety:

Jean-Claude Kaufmann announces the end of a world

In his latest book — *The End of Democracy: The Rise and Fall of a Civilization* — that French sociologist announces nothing less than the end of a civilization. According to him, the *Yellow-Vests Protest Movement* [a social protest movement for economic justice in France] expresses a demand from democracy that can never be satisfied. Jean-Claude Kaufmann mainly sees in it the noisy exuberance for a democracy that will only be a swan song.

You announce the end of democracy. Isn't that a slight exaggeration?

We must understand what the word "democracy" means. It begins with a well-known system: elections and political representation, but it continues into the daily life of the individual. Everyone becomes the centre of their own life and decides for themselves in all areas of their truth and their morality. That is what I call "hyperdemocracy", and it is an ongoing process.

Isn't individual emancipation progress?

Of course, it is a magnificent utopia to be able to control one's life. But there is a break in our civilization. It is the end of an era when the individual is defined by their social position, when they are surrounded by imposed barriers that provide them with benchmarks. It all started in the 1960s and the 1970s, creating a feeling of liberation. It is exciting for those who have the financial means and the cultural resources. But for all the others, the new society is insecure.

Why?

Previously, it was not our fault that we lived in modest circumstances. Nowadays, we are considered responsible when we do not have a better fate. So, we need to reassure ourselves. It starts with falling back into a cocoon of certainties, with people who think like us.

Is hyperdemocracy an obstacle to living together?

We are living in a crisis of collective values because everyone defines their own values. Against a world of competition, of injustice and of mental fatigue, we build small worlds. Small worlds of love, like family. But it can also be small worlds of hate. When you're angry, nothing is better than inventing an enemy. You have to understand that we are entering a new civilization where passion becomes stronger than reason. There will be tumult, and the *Yellow Vests* are just the beginning.

What does the Yellow-Vest Protest Movement say about the state of our society?

There is a lot of bottled-up anger that cannot express itself. Anger is often justified in a society that is controlled by the calculation and the finance of the economy, with differences in income that are obscene [fat-cat pay]. The *Yellow Vests* have a lot to say, but they can't. The division of society into a series of small groups with their own certainties, does not make it possible to find a common voice.

Has public discussion satisfied this desire for democracy?

In theory, participatory democracy is wonderful, but it sometimes creates monsters. Free expression sometimes releases bubbles of hate, as though they were certainties. We are no longer in an era of organized discussions that provide a minimum of listening to opposing arguments. We start from ourselves by trying to crush others, insulting them if necessary, to get through. That does not mean that the story is no longer there. We think that we talk to each other, but we don't talk to each other any more, we fight.

You are very pessimistic...

I believed that the individual would find refuge in humanitarian work, within their family or groups of friends, to create a type of upheaval of love on the margins of society. But I must admit that I was wrong. The rise in negative emotions is stronger than that. If the populist position grows like mushrooms everywhere, it is not by chance. It is part of an overall logic and long-term trend.

Does democracy in France seem threatened to you?

I'm not saying that we will live in a dictatorship in the year 2022, that is not a balanced development. What is important to understand is that we are at a breaking point, a tipping point. What follows is either the emergence of an authoritarian republic or the gradual hardening of democracy. The *French Burkini Controversy* that broke out in Corsica in 2016, illustrated the growing contradiction between republic and democracy.

What can we learn from that Burkini Controversy?

For me, the beach is revealing. It is an area of "hyperfreedom", of "hyperdemocratic" expression, where everyone does what they want. It is very different to schools [in France] where headscarves are banned. But all of a sudden, veiled women were banned from the beach. We tried to eliminate the problem by considering that it was trivial. But it is indicative of a time when more rules are made to restrict uncomfortable freedoms.

Has the emergence of the Internet made things worse?

It only accelerated a process that was already underway. There are positive aspects: for example, the Internet makes it possible to meet at certain points to restore lost pride. But it also has a very dark side. Robots have already taken power; algorithms lock us into our certainties. It is time to face the future and to have very careful thought about the definition of a new collective morality.

Starting with the definition of democracy, Jean-Claude Kaufmann tells us great truths that are actually applicable to a much greater extent and that do not only concern democracy. What he calls "hyperdemocracy" is really only another expression for selfishness. Under the pretext of defending common interests, it is often only personal interests that some people ultimately want to defend. That tendency is furthermore seen in all political systems. Communism, socialism, republican groups, extremist movements, the Right and the Left — all those directions of various opinions are nothing more than the expression of individual selfishness.

One can also see that in the different religions where one mainly seeks one's personal salvation and where the salvation of others, if not indifferent, is less important. In fact, selfishness has always existed. It simply changes its appearance. It becomes much more individualistic and even leads to disrespect for others. Jean-Claude Kaufmann is right when he says: "Everyone becomes the centre of their own life and decides for themselves in all areas of their truth and their morality." Additionally, new means of communication and information give everyone access to knowledge. One can therefore easily form one's own opinion.

All that leads us to the last form of government

Twin girls are born to make their happiness complete.

Then, once more, war comes to cast its shadow over poor human beings, snatching away beloved husbands, sons and fathers. Once again, they have to part and to watch the departure of their loved ones. Lisette is a brave young woman and will find the courage to wait and to face up to the many difficulties and privations that war imposes. She opens a small restaurant, which, thanks to her courage and management, becomes very prosperous. Her customers appreciate her rapid service and the art she possesses of putting everyone at ease and of serving each according to their taste. She very rarely receives news of her husband, but knows that he is a prisoner in enemy country. She prays and has Masses said, so that he may come home to her. Then, for three long months, nothing at all comes through.

Autumn has come with its mists clinging

around the ruins that man, in his madness, has made. One morning, at last, comes the news that the war is over. Lisette cannot contain herself. She runs to the church and rings the bells at full peal, rousing the whole village and bringing the people running. "Haven't you heard? The war is over! My husband is coming home, and all yours as well!" And so he does, though very weak and terribly run down, only to fall ill ten years later and to die after being half paralysed. With his last breath, he bids his wife and daughters goodbye.

Lisette is deeply grieved, and she has Mass after Mass said, so that he will not have to suffer too long in Purgatory.

In 1960, on a Tuesday morning in spring, Lisette is doing business with a traveller. She is happy, all is well with her, and this is a day of rejoicing, being the birthday of her twin girls. Once they have come to terms concerning the accommodation he is to have

in her hotel, the traveller asks: "Madam, are you a believer?"

"I am a practising believer," she answered, "but that can be of no importance to you."

"On the contrary," he said, "I am going to give you a paper that has done me so much good and that I hope will do as much for you."

Lisette stuffs *The Monitor of the Reign of Justice* into her pocket and goes about her work, organizing the midday meal. In the evening, feeling she has a moment to herself, curiosity sends her into her room to have a quiet look at that paper. She reads it right through and spends a sleepless night with tears of joy wetting her pillow. She thinks: "Can it be possible? No such thing as Hell! No such thing as Purgatory! So, I've been serving the false god without knowing it... And there is a family on Earth practising to live up to God's law! And the dead are going to rise again!" She puts the light on again

and reads over some passages, and all she can say is: "It must be true!"

A week later, the traveller passes that way again. He is overjoyed to be told that his paper is simply wonderful and that Lisette wants to subscribe to it at once. She said: "I'm so relieved to learn that there are no eternal torments and that God is kind. All my life, I have felt that that was so, but could find no way to explain it. Now, I have found the key to all those mysteries that have troubled me so much."

Lisette has also acquired the three books written by the Lord's Messenger for this Time of the End. She has visited every home in her village to bring them the Good News, the consoling tidings of the Kingdom of God, to tell everybody that she has found the Truth and that henceforth she will frequently be away at meetings of the Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association).

Of course, her daughters find it impossible

which precedes the Great Tribulation that is indicated in the Bible, which is anarchy. It is not only the end of democracy, as Jean-Claude Kaufmann announces, but the end of the "present evil world". Apostle Peter gives us a description of those events in his Second Letter in which he says the following: "The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. The Heavens will pass away with a great roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the Earth and everything done on it will be burned up. ... The Heavens will be destroyed by fire, and elements will melt in the flames" 2 Peter 3: 10 and 12. That is not an apocalyptic prophecy meant to scare us. That prediction lets us understand that every material and moral support that humankind rests on will be annihilated. Nothing will remain of them. It will be an unprecedented Distress because there will be no refuge in any human imagination or achievement. Only those people who cultivate holy conduct and godliness will remain, along with the meek (the gentle) whom our dear Saviour spoke about when he said that they will inherit the Earth. Matthew 5: 5.

The Great Tribulation will precede God's Kingdom that will be established all over the world. There, truth and justice will reign as sovereign master. For that reason, Apostle Peter adds: "But according to his promise, we are looking forward to a New Heaven and a New Earth where justice [righteousness] dwells" 2 Peter 3: 13. That is a wonderful hope that we owe our dear Saviour and his Church who paid the price for it with the gift of their lives. By virtue of that Sacrifice, all people will be resurrected on Earth, will receive a divine education and will reach their destiny, the one that they had originally received in the Garden of Eden: eternal life.

Touching reunion!

This is a heart-moving story that was told to one of our evangelists years ago by a subscriber, and that we happily quote as follows:

I was still a child when my father returned from World War 2 prisoner-of-war (POW) captivity. I don't want to relate to you the details of the emotions experienced on that day. I also leave it to you to imagine everyone's joy.

Because he was a POW who worked on a large Ger-

man farm, he returned in relatively good health compared to many other deportees. Despite the heavy field work, he suffered no hardships and was allowed to eat meals at his masters' table.

This long forced displacement left a deep mark on his life. And so, he often told us, in the evenings, about his experiences during those four years, especially about a young dog, a German Shepherd called Dick that was very attached to him. My father really took this happy and affectionate animal into his heart, which looked for his companionship and showed him comforting friendship, which his heart really needed during those four years in exile. He thus felt less lonely.

The long-desired and expected day of his freedom, finally arrived. During the departure from the farm, the dog seemed very sad because it must have anticipated a painful separation due to the good-byes exchanged between the masters and my father. It cost my father a lot to leave that beloved animal that helped him stay cheerful. But they had to separate, no matter what. Shortly after my father came home, he returned to his work. This time, not as a POW, but in the factory where he was greatly appreciated by the management and where he could independently organize his activity as a production manager without supervision or control.

One evening, several weeks after my father's POW return, while we were eating at the table, we heard a dog whimpering through a front window. It looked at us through the glass. Quite baffled, my mother went to open it. Then, a scene unfolded that will forever be engraved in my memory. I saw my father suddenly burst into tears of joy. He recognized Dick, his faithful companion that supported him during captivity and that he dearly loved!

The animal was exhausted and emaciated, and its paws were bleeding, but its bright eyes showed the joy of finding the person it was longing for and who was dearer to it than its masters. The joy and the affection between the two of them do not need to be described. My father was emotional for days afterwards. This event became known throughout the country, because the distance from the farm where my father worked as a POW, to our home, was more than 700 kilometres!

Through the care that was necessary because of its

serious exhaustion, and through the joy of the reunion, Dick got back on its feet in a short time. This dog became a celebrity in the area.

"Furthermore," said our subscriber to me, "there are two things that will prove to you the value and the intelligence of this dog":

Every morning, Dick accompanied my father, whom it never left, to work. Always at 4pm, after a pat, and perfectly knowing the mission it was on, it walked to the school that my siblings and I went to every day. After arriving there, it waited at the gate and then protected us as it walked us home, where our mother expected us.

We had an interesting experience on an All Saints' Day. I remember it as though it were yesterday. Our entire family went to the cemetery. Dick obviously accompanied us. But because the gatekeeper was not allowed to admit dogs, we had to leave our dear four-legged friend outside the entrance. After we had finished visiting the various graves of relatives, we went to the exit, which was on the opposite side of the cemetery's entrance. Between the two gates, there was a distance of at least 200 metres, as it was a large cemetery.

To our great surprise, Dick already stood at the exit, ready to welcome us, although the surrounding wall would have prevented it from observing the direction we were walking in. Together, we came to the conclusion that our faithful friend had an extraordinary sense that surpassed our understanding. But it undoubtedly had more, an ability that humans have not been able to fathom to this day.

Blind and old, it peacefully passed away. I do not need to tell you that we cried a lot, as it really was a member of the family.

In the meantime, father has also left this world, and my mother is now 82. I am happy to tell you this simple story of an animal that we lived with and that has left us memories of unforgettable loyalty and friendship. For our dog, there were no borders, no exalted nationalism and no particular language. Only affection, tenderness and true goodness counted. It is undoubtedly that impression that led its senses up hill and down dale and over all sorts of obstacles, and that let it overcome difficulties and tiredness in order to find a person who loved it...

to follow her in her enthusiasm for the Lord Who has revealed his ways to her. There is weeping and there are tears, but she remains unshaken. One Thursday, she catches the bus to her first meeting... The meeting times have just been changed, and she finds the door locked. She is not put out by that, so she goes to a nearby park and sits down to read the book she has with her: *Eternal Life*.

The following Sunday finds her in the midst of her brothers and sisters in the faith, and entirely won by the atmosphere of simplicity and warmth that pervades the assembly. The commentary delivered by one of the brothers, does her a great deal of good. How different it is from those of the priests she has known! How she would like to pass her faith on to those she loves, still caught in the net of that spirit of vain religion which makes one hard and sad!

In spite of all the difficulties it gives rise to, Lisette leaves her home and her customers and all, to set out evangelizing. Courageously, with a few brothers and sisters, she goes from door to door, to tell of her joy and of her hope in better days. The Lord allows many experiences for the purpose of ripening her faith. He also grants her a stay in one of the Demonstration Stations of a neighbouring country, so that she may enjoy a little rest and some wholesome air. How restful that peace is! That family atmosphere is created by the efforts made by the brothers and sisters to help each other, to make things easy for each other and to complete each other. She comes home with some unforgettable impressions that her daughters are unfortunately unable to share with her. She goes on hoping, knowing that, as He did for her, the Lord will grant perception of his calling at the right time.

Lisette resumes her place in the ranks of the brave. It gives her so much joy to talk to people, so greatly perplexed, about the time of blessing that is at hand, in which everybody will know God and enjoy the results of his kindness. How far she has come from the agonizing impressions created by her grandmother who used to say: "Don't complain, there's worse to come"! Now, it is the Kingdom of God that is to come with its blessings, its resurrections and its everlasting joys.

One morning, she receives a letter from the brethren at the headquarters of the Angel of the Lord (the Philanthropic Association), of-

fering her the possibility of undertaking another ministry. She joyfully accepts that new responsibility, being sure that the Lord only offers his children the places where success awaits them. She is invited to a Demonstration Station to take charge of the kitchen. In spite of her children's tears and the wrench of parting, she sets forth in the joy of serving.

Since then, her soul rejoicing every morning, she can only thank God for having enlightened her, guided her and kept her all her life. In the atmosphere of the Divine Family, she is practising changing her sentiments to arrive at resemblance with the wonderful Pattern given to her in our dear Saviour. Confident of his kindness, she is ardently working on serving her brothers and sisters with all the generous warmth of her grateful heart, thankful to the Lord, the God of all kindness and mercy, Whom she has come to know at the school of divine grace. Her joy is also well described in the following verse of this hymn:

In the Lord's service

*With Thee, every day,
dear Father, is a festive day,
For my heart becometh better:
kind in every way.
In the Father's House,
most truly, hearts can open out,
By the light so warm
and kindly compassed all about.*

News in brief of the Reign of Justice

From all quarters, we are receiving encouraging news of the big Family of Faith scattered all over the world. Everywhere, meetings full of life will be held to commemorate the anniversary of the gathering together of the candidate members of the Little Flock. Those meetings enable us, for one thing, to measure the efforts that have been made and consequently also the progress there has been, and for another thing, to obtain an exact check of the shortcomings and tardiness to be made up. We feel that, year by year, these meetings gain importance in the respect that we become ever-more clearly aware of what the formation of the character of a true Disciple really means, of one who is called to lay down one's life as the Master did.

We always receive a great number of let-

ters wishing us blessing. The generality of groups also decides to express their attachment to the Lord's Work in a kind material collaboration. We thank them warmly in the Lord's Name, and promise to make use of all that with perfect fidelity for the purpose of making the Work progress and of promoting the spreading of the message ever further, bringing great consolation and also the indispensable warning to today's world which is being thrust ever nearer to the precipice. We feel how great the responsibility is of all who know the divine plan, for the question is to call, out of the world, all the people who hunger and thirst for righteousness and truth. That is becoming ever-more urgent. For one would have to be blind or cut off one's senses, not to perceive the present world's mad race to catastrophe.

Real Disciples of Christ are not satisfied with a mere theoretical religion: they intend to give their lives as a sacrifice, in complete renouncement of self, of all self-interest, of material interests and of everything else. They feel irresistibly urged to cast everything into the scale pan on the side of faithfulness to their ministry.

The meeting that will be held in Cartigny will set before us the glorious programme proposed to real Disciples and to members of the Host of the Lord, who is now rising. We can impress our minds with these words of our Lord himself when speaking to his Disciples about the Time of the End: "If those days [the Tribulation] were not shortened, nobody would be saved." He adds that they will be shortened by the Elect (the Chosen Ones). That shows up, at once, the great responsibility of the people who are called to be the Elect. They will, by then, have quite changed their mentality to follow the Lamb of God wherever he has been.

The Lord's message, delivered by his Faithful and Wise Servant, lays particular stress on what will have to be the character of those real Disciples, so that they may be the Revealing of the Sons of God, and put an end to the trouble. They have become real Priests who do not sacrifice an animal or a piece of bread, but sacrifice themselves in full. For that purpose, in their midst, there must no longer be any bitterness, jealousy, anger, material interests of any kind, or complaints, even when treated unjustly. In all things, they

have the immense privilege of being able to renounce self for the purpose of paying for the guilty, of interceding for them, and of returning good for evil.

With such a ministry to be fulfilled, it is not to be wondered at that there would have only been a Little Flock who obtain such a character. That is what the divine Word shows us very clearly. God's Messenger — announced in advance in the Old Testament (Old Covenant) and by the Lord Jesus himself — by giving his life and by utter faithfulness to divine ways, placed himself in a position to be employed in bringing the precious message of the Truth of the present time. That made it possible for the people who are determined to become real Disciples of Christ, to unite together to make up what Paul the Apostle calls the Revealing of the Sons of God to groaning and dying humanity. Today, those words take on a quite extraordinary value and significance.

The message that will be read to us on that day of spiritual festivity, reminds us, in a striking manner, of the glorious Work of him who is the Centre of the Redemption of the human race, our Lord Jesus Christ. His is the only name in which mankind can receive Salvation. He paid the price of it on the Cross. He accepted — without a complaint or a murmur — insults, blows and injuries of every kind. He thus amassed the riches necessary for saving mankind and delivering the guilty. They are the precious footsteps in which the Little Flock, the true Church of Christ, has faithfully followed throughout the Gospel Age.

The following Bible text will also be explained: "Strap your sword to your side, O mighty warrior, with your glory and your majesty." Those words are taken from one of the psalms of David, who, in his vision, saw that Mighty Warrior, who was Christ. After having suffered opposition, persecution and the ignominious death of the Cross, he was, at his glorious resurrection, invested with the full glory of divine nature. It is also he who wields the sword of the Spirit and the Truth, as he calls, to follow him, those who are determined to renounce self.

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