



Discovering, deepening
our awareness of our Spirituality

Journey of Enrichment

2011-2012 Year of Shared Spirituality

"Put out into deep water,
and let down the nets for a catch." Luke 5,4



Contemplation – Deep intimacy with God

We have almost completed the Year of Shared Spirituality offered as part of our Journey of Enrichment. It is time to look – to contemplate – the light that shone on our two congregations from month to month and to prepare ourselves to continue our journey with Christ.

Let Jesus' words resonate within us: « *I no longer call you slaves, (...) but friends...* » (Jn 15: 15), inspiring us to live a deep intimacy with Him. St Paul also said to the Thessalonians: « *Do not quench the Spirit.* » (Thess. 5: 19)

For Reflection:

« *In Contemplation we focus our attention on God. It is turning all of our being towards God, towards its Source and Creator... To be, to belong to God, to be there for God, in God's presence. Open ourselves to the radiance of the Divine... let God look at us.* »¹

« *To let go of knowing God through our own means here on earth... so that God may infuse in us a knowledge of God which is both illuminating regarding God's existence and at the same time a complete unknowing of who God really is. It is God seen from the other side, like it was for Moses.* » (cf. Ex 33: 18)

Isn't it time to « let go » so that the Spirit can work within us... To belong to God, while not wanting anything except what God wants? « *I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord* » St Paul to the Philippians (3: 8, 9).

« *Contemplative life, the intimate union with the divine Master, must be at the core of our daily life... We can spend our life very well working and carrying out our exterior activities, and at the same time live an interior life in total union with God. God is always present and we just need to go interiorly to find God.* »²

Invitation to Contemplation in our Congregations:

- It is both in the constant contemplation of the Heart of Jesus and, after His example, in their commitment on the paths of compassion, that the Holy Spirit will "form in them" Jesus the Saviour, the Incarnation of the Father's Mercy. (cf. Constitutions of Our Lady of Charity)
- It is only out of this intimate union that we act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly in his presence. (cf. Good Shepherd Constitutions, no 45)
- The contemplative dimension of our mission, which renews our faith and our union with Christ, makes us more attentive to the demands of the Kingdom. His Spirit calls us to discern our response to the new needs that are constantly emerging. (GS, no 7)

¹ Yves Raguin, *Chemins de contemplation*

² Michel de Kerdreux, *Comme une flamme*, Paris, 1968

SJE: Commitment to live for Jesus:

« If we want to pray well... we must pray in the name of Jesus Christ... The first disposition for prayer is deep humility; the second, a loving and respectful confidence; the third, purity of intention; the fourth, perseverance... Give your mind and heart fervently to Jesus and to His divine Spirit. »³

« How can I answer the cry of all these voices by which you invite me to love you? I want my thoughts, words and deeds to turn into so many voices by which I tell you: I love you! » (Lectionary, p.166)

The Example of SME⁴:

Marie Euphrasia was a contemplative woman. Her action is directed by a strong sense of working for the glory of God. Her contemplative life gives her a spiritual perspective on the events of life. She could easily move from the consolation of prayer to the worries of work, which showed that everything she did was for God. She knows God is within her and is supporting her in her apostolic activity.

« Marie Euphrasia was anchored in God, like sunflowers that always face the sun ... Following from this, prayer and action are always woven together, in a reciprocal movement. It is with the sentiments of Jesus that we work, that we praise the Lord, that we approach one another... »

Questions – alone or in community:

- How can we « weave together » contemplation and action in our daily life?
- What symbols of grace have I discovered this year in my life and around me?
- What are the signs of hope that give strength to my spiritual life?
- How do I experience the contemplative dimension in my daily life? How do we « come before God » and let God be reflected in us? Is my prayer an « offertory »?

Prayer:

Oh divine Love, be the life of my life, the soul of my soul, the heart of my heart!
We love you with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strengths!

We offer you our heart,
We give it to you,
We consecrate it to you,
We sacrifice it for you.
Receive it, hold it fully,
Purify it, enlighten it, sanctify it... (Ave Cor)

Reading references:

Yves Raguin, *Chemins de contemplation*.
Michel de Kerdreux, *Comme une flamme*, Paris, 1968
John Eudes, *Life and Kingdom of Jesus* (XII, 32, p. 41)
Odile Laugier, *Marie Euphrasie qui es-tu?*, Anthology, book 1



"Meditation is: the earth exploring the sky;
Contemplation is: the sky lighting the earth
with a thousand stars."

³ John Eudes, *Life and Kingdom of Jesus* (XII, 32, p. 41)

⁴ Odile Laugier, *Marie Euphrasie qui es-tu?*, Anthology, book 1