

Sierre, August 22, 1996

The Waxing Moon

... I think that all of you who are listening to this thought are living, more or less, the reality of "You, Lord, are my only good", addressed to Jesus crucified and forsaken, adding "with Mary Desolate".

This is the basis of our spiritual life, so as to continue on profitably with our daily holy journey. In some way, it makes us worthy to follow Jesus. In fact, He wants us to love the cross ("take up their cross") [Mt. 10:38] and to be detached from everything ("deny themselves") "Whoever wishes to come after Me..." [Mt. 16:24]. We know what He is asking.

Nevertheless, in doing all this, we still haven't done everything. We said this on other occasions. It is not enough to follow Jesus. We must see where He wants to bring us.

He wants to place us on His path, which is the path of love.

We must love, then, love in a supernatural way. We must love God by doing His will and love our neighbor through the four ways we know: seeing Jesus in everybody, loving everybody, taking the initiative in loving, making ourselves one.

And our way of loving must always improve in order to be authentic and pleasing to God: "Whoever does not go forward, goes backward".

In these past weeks I have been reading a booklet that someone kindly sent to me. It's very beautiful, and can also be used for meditation.

It quotes many sayings on true love that can be found in Sacred Scripture, in the saints, but also in Christian or non-Christian thinkers and even non-believers.

In speaking of love, the book confirms, if we needed a confirmation, the absolute importance of this attitude and it too recommends improvement.

Because I liked these sayings very much, I would like to share some of them with you.

This is from St. Gregory the Great: "We can improve more in loving God, if first, on the lap of His love, we are nursed on love of neighbor."

Fritz Usinger (1895), German poet and essayist, affirms: "Whoever gives love is enriched by what they give. The more they give, the more they are enriched."

Ricarda Huch, a German writer (1864-1947) adds: "Love is the only thing that grows when we it is given away abundantly."

Michail J. Lermontov, a 19th century Russian writer (1814-1841) says: "Love is like fire: if it is not fed, it dies out."

And St. Augustine: "In the measure that you grow in love, you grow in beauty, because love is the beauty of the soul."

With regard to the need to improve always, Fulton J. Sheen (1895-1979), the famous American bishop and writer affirms: "In the kingdom of love, there is no flatland: either you go uphill or you go downhill."

Viscount de Ségur, a 19th century French writer, says: "Love is like the moon: if it doesn't wax, it wanes."

And love can always grow because, as St. Thomas affirms: "There are no limits to charity, because it is a sharing in the infinite charity, which is the Holy Spirit."

We know that we must love. So this month let's insist on growing. I liked the last words of a letter I received from a focolarina: "in the waxing moon, Yours..."

So then, let's all of us, too, be "in the waxing moon" and "in the Kingdom of love where there is no flatland, where we go either uphill or downhill."

Let us ask ourselves now and then during the day: Have I improved in my love for God

and for my brothers and sisters?

We will be able to improve our love for God through our daily prayers or by carrying out our duties better and better. We will be able to improve in our love for brothers and sisters every time we meet them.

I've tried it: we need to pay more attention to our spiritual life; but we must have a spiritual life, or else we're going downhill and waning. Improving must become a habit. It's necessary. So take courage. ...

Chiara Lubich