

THE PRELIMINARY BATTLE

[This article by Jean Vaquié was published originally in the counter-revolutionary journal *Lecture et Tradition*¹ in 1990 and then in issue 156 of *Action Familiale et Scolaire (AFS)*. It was subsequently issued as a supplement to *AFS* No. 225, February 2013. It was published in English in *Apropos* No. 21, Lent 2003. We may consider it as a charter for the current counter-revolutionary struggle. The author outlines there three superimposed battles:

- that of **maintenance** which has as its object the safeguarding the remnant of Christianity which still remains. It is called the **lesser battle**;
- that of **supplication** called the **preliminary battle**;
- that of the transfer of power allowing the return of Christian social order. It pertains directly to God and is called the **greater battle**.

The lesser battle and the preliminary battle must be conducted simultaneously and by the same combatants. It is important not to waste our human forces against an enemy who today is all powerful... but also important that we use to the full the spiritual weapons which the enemy lacks. This is the merit of this article which demonstrates this very clearly. Although the article naturally refers to the situation in France, there are lessons for all who are engaged in the counter-revolution because the power of the revolution prevails in all our countries. It has lessons too for the fight against Modernism in the Church. (Translation by ASF & MT.) It is now posted on the *Apropos* website, www.apropos.org.uk]

The Two Battles

It is becoming more and more obvious that the counter-revolutionary struggle takes place on two levels.

1. First of all we have to fight to preserve the final positions which remain to us. It is only too apparent and necessary, to preserve our chapels, our few monasteries, our schools, our publications, our associations, and more generally our hope of salvation and the orthodoxy of our doctrines. We have are thus involved in a series of small battles which we cannot avoid in order to **conserve** what we have.

Indeed, we find a mention of these fights in Holy Scripture itself. St John the Evangelist, under the dictation of 'He that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars', that is, under the dictation of Our Lord, addresses himself to the Angel of the Church of Sardis by saying: '*Esto vigilens et confirma cetera quae moritura erant*' which means 'Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die' (Apoc.3:2).

The Church of Sardis, we know, corresponds to our time. This admonition, '*Strengthen the things that remain*' is therefore addressed to us - Heaven expects us to protect the things that remain. This formulates our mission. This constitutes our daily counter-revolutionary struggle. Such is **the lesser battle**, a defensive battle, a battle of maintenance.

2. But over and above these innumerable defensive commitments, an even more important battle has begun the objective of which is **the transfer of power**. '*I will reign in spite of my enemies*'. Who among us could have forgotten this laconic but formal promise, which Our Lord

¹ *Lecture et Tradition*, BPI, 86190 Chiré-en Montreuil, France.

made to St. Margaret-Mary in 1689? To her alone, it could be enough. But it was renewed, during the 19th and 20th centuries, to a great number of mystics, and in particular to Madam Royer. And when one considers **the vow resulting from the repetition of the promise**, one can affirm that **the reign of the Sacred Heart was promised to us under oath**. We can therefore be assured that today Our Lord is operating mysteriously in His own way, to extirpate the power of the Beast and to establish His own reign. This mysterious fight, of which He is the essential agent, constitutes **the greater battle** with that transfer of power as its main objective.

These two battles both correspond to the Divine Will. We believe we can no more escape from one than the other. They are intermingled because they are both supported by the same combatants who thus have two different battles to fight. It is of prime importance to distinguish between the two battles because they do not have the same objective and consequently they are not susceptible to the same strategy. In particular the part which falls to God and that which falls to men differs greatly from one battle to the other.

The reluctance to accept this, which one notices among the leaders of groups, results from most seeing these as the one and the same battle and confusing the secondary objectives, which are those of the lesser battle, with the main objective which is that of the greater battle. We would like to examine more closely what the respective strategies of these two superimposed confrontations are exactly.

THE LESSER BATTLE

How do we conduct this "battle of maintenance"? Because of its historic roots, it presents a certain number of peculiarities from which ensue tactical constraints for the leaders of groups. They cannot engage in any kind of action because their initiatives are confined within certain limits and constraints which we shall describe in the following four paragraphs.

- **Fundamental anti-revolutionary dynamism**

The real strong forces of France were always anti-revolutionary. The initial gift made to our country was its Christian monarchy. The secular republic is a punishment arising from the sins of the people "*propter peccata populi*". The spontaneous tendency of France is not towards the republic but towards restoration. Our Nation particularly wishes to return to that initial gift. Such is its fundamental dynamism.

This instinctive rejection of the revolution is particularly perceptible today. We see unmistakably a revival of strong forces. So much so that traditionalists, noticing the rise of anti-revolutionary potential, consider themselves powerful enough to face, with a good chance of success, the trials of strength which would pit them against the revolutionary powers that be. And it is necessary to recognize that, theoretically, they are right, because the elementary reaction of the nation, when one considers it in isolation, is a powerful and particularly current phenomenon.

However, in opposition to this fundamental current "the Adversary" has woven a tight network of revolutionary constraints which are totally artificial, but which imposes itself in an absolute way. Legal power belongs to this network, and, *a fortiori*, to the "occult power" which is the well-known inspirer of it.

The skill of our politicians, which is considerable, consists essentially in making France vote in opposition to its fundamental dynamism. Here we have with utmost clarity the fruit of their labour and it is remarkable. France is like a mount dominated by a rider who seeks only to exhaust it. It no longer has the strength to throw him. In short, the constantly renewing anti-revolutionary

energy of our country is ceaselessly neutralized, mutilated and inverted. New anti-revolutionary generations are mown down as soon as they arise. And France goes through one purge after another. The "power of the Beast" although essentially utopian due to its nature, has become, in fact, irreversible. The current drive of anti-revolutionary dynamism mustn't give us any illusions. It will befall the same fate as previous ones. We should prepare for a new purge.

Such is the first peculiarity of the lesser battle: to know that it is enjoined by a minority which is naturally strong, but humanly **powerless**. It is important that leaders of groups are aware of this first difficulty. Fundamental anti-revolutionary dynamism is real, but it is neutralized by a practically **insuperable** revolutionary apparatus.

Unfavourable legal position

Traditionalists are aware of the importance of defending God's laws against the power of the Beast. It is from this that they derive their inspiration and confidence. But they imagine too easily that this principled stance gives a position of legal superiority over the secular State.² They take to the streets brandishing the Decalogue and the Gospel and accuse the State of having broken them. They present them before mayors, prefects and ministers saying: "It is your duty, by divine law, which is above all human laws, to forbid abortion, euthanasia, [same-sex 'marriage'], public blasphemy, the construction of mosques and the massive naturalisation of Moslems".

But do we not see that it is now a bit too late to be making these speeches. It was necessary in the first place to have opposed the constitution and secularisation of the State. To be precise, this secularisation was obtained in 1958 thanks to the votes of Catholics. It was Catholics who tilted the balance towards the definitive apostasy of the State. Pushed on by their bishops — themselves manipulated by the future Cardinal Villot, then the Director of the Secretariat of the French Episcopate, they voted, *en masse* for the secular constitution proposed by General de Gaulle. It is a bit late in the day to demand from the Godless State the recognition of God's laws.

In the "everyday" battle which we must undertake we are reduced to the means of secular legality which, besides, will become more and more rigorous, and always reducing further our means of defence.

A Socialist legality is in place in which Christians and their God will be considered as public enemies. We understand that such a situation is vexing for traditionalists and their leaders.

If, however, under the context of exploiting a divine, imprescriptible law, we were to begin a war of principle against the secular State, we would transgress the limits of the lesser battle by entering the field of the superior battle which requires a very different strategy as we will see.

Maintaining our lamps

The everyday battle is not a decisive battle. The traditional forces committed to it do not have the means to effect such a breakthrough. Their appropriate ministry is to protect *'the things that remain which are ready to die.'*

When the Master comes it is necessary that He finds us vigilant. He specifically asks us not to disappear, not to waste forces or lives which are His and which He will need, because the combatants in the lesser battle, as we have already pointed out, are the same as those of the superior battle which aims at the transfer of power. Placed by Providence at the pivot of both phases, they have to engage in two battles which are simultaneous in time but different in their

² [In real terms they have a superiority over the secular state but they are constrained in their fight within the secular legal system which does not recognise any law superior to man-made law. Editor, *Apropos.*]

objectives and in their strategies.

We will see in the superior battle that God's part dominates and completely obliterates that of man. But should we conclude from this that the "divine part" is unimportant in the defensive battle.

Certainly not. Without the assistance of Heaven, without the help of the Holy Angels and our patron saints, how could we get through the inevitable stages of a civil and unfamiliar war which we can summarise in a few words: provocations, destabilisation, hostages, reprisals, informers, public and secret tribunals, political terror, personal vengeance, inflation, bankruptcy and anarchy.

One of the essential conditions to maintain what would be a humble lamp during this complex and austere period, is the constant raising of the soul to Heaven to obtain at all times the indispensable protection required.

God's part is not therefore unimportant in the defensive struggles.

A Strategy of Prudence

Concerning the conduct of the defensive battle, two preliminary observations are necessary:

- This battle has only secondary objectives;
- No exceptional divine assistance is promised.

Consequently, the lesser battle must be directed according to the usual processes of human government. If our recollection does not deceive us, St Thomas will point us in the right direction.

We are told that one evening he arrived to spend the night in a monastery where they were electing an Abbot. *'We elected the most learned!'* they told him. Saint Thomas objected: *'If he is the most learned, then let him teach!'* The monks began the election again. *'This time we elected the most pious.'* *'If he is the most pious',* he said, *'then let him pray'*. They began the election again for the third time *'We have now elected the most prudent'*. ***'Then, if he is the most prudent, at last, let him rule!'***

The defensive battle must be led with **prudence**. Now the same St Thomas, in another passage, accepts, that in the case where a people is seriously tyrannized, the prospect of a revolt has a certain number of conditions which are summarized as follows: It requires that **the remedy**, that is to say the revolt, **is not worse than the evil**, that is to say the tyranny, it intends to overthrow. If the revolt leads to more disadvantages than benefits, it exceeds the limits of prudence, and one should avoid resorting so as not to aggravate the situation.

Defensive activity can, at certain times, require acts of boldness. The traditionalist fight has already supplied it with some memorable examples and it is likely that it will supply it with others. We merely say that these acts of boldness should not be undertaken on impulse or on the toss of the dice which would be rash. They must involve a degree of reflection and prudence. This is absolutely indisputable.

The virtue of fortitude, which rests in the soul, is altogether different from physical strength. What does it serve us if we have a soul full of moral strength, if we do not have, in our hand, any material force with which to implement it? The virtue of fortitude alone does not give us the power to intervene.

When the opponent is most powerful and when he prepares a new purge, simple common sense demands that one recommends, certainly not inactivity, but prudence all the same!

Conclusion

We have just shown the difference between, on the one hand, the secondary objectives - to know how to maintain the ultimate traditional positions which constitute what is at stake in the lesser battle, and on the other hand - the main objective which is to know how to extirpate the power of the Beast which is the aim of the greater battle.

Many shall not want to recognise this distinction. They will say and they already say, *'There are not two battles, there is only one. The transfer of power can result only from a succession of small basic victories from one day to the next. This transfer is a long term affair; our recovery can be only very slow. It is utopian to expect an abrupt outcome'*.

The leaders of groups who argue thus are going to expend their main effort on secondary objectives, those exactly where our opponents, strong in their socialist legality, sit in wait for them. Our opponents, indeed, will seek, as they usually do to make us lose our cool and draw us into conflict. And it is likely that they will succeed in doing so, in part at least, causing large parts of the traditional defence to be breached.

Madam Royer, apostle of devotion to the Sacred Heart and a privileged soul, writes prophetically: *'The French will arrive at the borders of despair'*. This expression clearly indicates that she does not envisage a "slow recovery", but rather **a succession of setbacks**.

Such is the prognosis, very pessimistic, it is true, that we can make regarding the lesser battle. We will see that it is not the same regarding the greater battle which we shall discuss now.

THE GREATER BATTLE

- **A double objective**

The greater battle has a double objective:

- The extirpation of the power of the Beast;
- The restoration of the power of divine right.

Now, this double objective is radically impossible to attain by the current, remaining, anti-revolutionary minority, neutralized as it is by the Masonic apparatus. However, we know, thanks to the promises which were made by the Sacred Heart to St Margaret-Mary and to so many other privileged souls, that this battle is already taking place invisibly and progresses inexorably towards the victorious end which is reserved for it.

What do we know about the likely progress of this battle?

We know two things for definite:

- It is led by the same minority on which the lesser battle already weighs heavily;
- It will end by a miracle of resurrection.

We are going to examine, in the following two paragraphs, the respective place and role of this minority and this miracle.

- **The Few**

Those that understand God's plan and who seek to comply with it, form, one will agree, the "few" to whom Our Lady of Salette appeals when she says *'Fight, children of light, you, the few who can see'*.

What is the significance of this minority, in terms of the supernatural order, and what can one expect of it in our earthly fight?

God always saves himself a "few" in whom he puts the faith in reserve. He often even entrusts it to a single man. For example Moses had only his staff, and his faith, to take the Hebrews out of Egypt. David, too, had only his sling and his faith, to overcome Goliath. Also, at the time of the Incarnation, a single family was perfect, the Holy family, the head of which was St Joseph.

This "reserve of faith" being established, God intervenes personally only at the last minute, when all human hope is lost. It is quite evident that a **"Saviour" saves only when everything is lost.**

So that the display of divine power is made manifest, it is necessary that the "reserve of faith" is merely insignificant. But it is not necessary for the reserve of faith to have completely disappeared.

There is a providential disposition here that requires to be well understood.

It would seem nevertheless that, if there remained absolutely nothing, absolutely no more faith, if God had no more "witness" on earth, His power and His triumph would be more obvious every time it is brought to bear to restore His works ruined by human negligence.

But it is necessary to understand that if God keeps for Himself a tiny outpost as it were, a single man, a single family, a "few"; it is because He does not create anew today. **He makes his earthly works with "nothings", but not with "nothing"**. He operates with **the remnant**, that is with unimportant things, with mere nothings which remind us of the nothingness out of which He brought forth creation. But nothings, which are not however nothingness.

Such is the supernatural role of the "few" evoked by Our Lady of Salette: a tiny remnant which God intends to use to restore what was abolished. What is its value now in the earthly battle? And first of all can we assess it quantitatively?

The "few" about which we speak, is simply a minority that God Himself establishes and which He increases or decreases in number as He thinks fit. **He recruits this minority where He wills and not only from among those who may imagine themselves, rightly or wrongly, to be the appointed elite.**

Does this minority have to refrain from any proselytism to remain a closed minority? Such a limitation would be impossible to realize and moreover it would not be desirable. A moderate proselytism is necessary. It reveals a healthy vitality. It is necessary only that it restricts itself to proselytizing with a view to discover souls already providentially prepared in a pre-established harmony.

It would exceed its normal limits if it was transformed into a noisy, mass-media propaganda machine.

We will try to discover, as far as possible, what the role of the "few" is in the greater battle. But we shall understand this role all the more if we have first of all examined under what sort of conditions the "miracle of the resurrection", which the few seek, is likely to occur.

A miracle of resurrection

When one synthesizes predictions which religious archives have kept track of since the origins of Christian France, one is soon convinced that we are entitled to wait, for divine intervention in favour of the former monarchy, today destroyed, and which we could indeed call a miracle of resurrection.

Who is thus promised resurrection?

Firstly the monarchy abolished for two-hundred years. But France also, which, deprived of its leader that is to say its head, died to grace in as much as nation. And also the universal Church which has fallen to the power of her opponent and which herself is almost in a state of mystical death.

To understand what has to occur, we are quite naturally led to recall the archetypal resurrection and to examine Lazarus's resurrection as described in chapter 11 of St John's Gospel. The four phases of this extraordinary event will suggest to us what might too be the four phases of the resurrection of royal France.

The four phases of the raising of Lazarus

- **First phase**

Jesus, knowing what He must do, travels slowly and reflectively to Lazarus's home at Bethany. He meets Martha and He asks her at once about her strength of faith, because such is a precondition for the resurrection of the one who has just died: *'I am the resurrection and life ... Believest thou this? (v.25-26)'*. And Martha answers: *'Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ the son of the living God, who art come into this world.'*(v.27)

And she believes it, not by adhering to a magisterial doctrine, which has yet to exist, but through human faith, just as Charles VII will believe in Joan of Arc's voices. This absence of skepticism in Martha, this confidence, opens the way to the exercise of divine power.

- **Second phase**

Jesus then, approaches the tomb. It was a vault and a stone was rolled in front of the opening to seal it. Jesus said *'Tollite lapidem'*, remove the stone. This work, indeed, does not fall to God because it is within the capacity of man to execute. That is why the Word Incarnate does not do it.

We notice also that the stone is an obstacle between Jesus and the corpse which is to be returned to life. We shall see later what meaning this obstacle has in terms of our particular interpretation.

- **Third phase**

This is the essential phase. Jesus shouts in a loud voice:

'Lazare veni foras!' *'Lazarus come forth!'* (v. 43). He does what only God can do: to bring the dead back to life. We shall find this essential phase in the process of restoration.

- **Fourth phase**

He who had been dead came out of the grave, his feet and hands bound in bandages. And his face was wrapped in a shroud. Jesus said to them: *'Solvite eum et sinite abire.'* (*'Loosen him and let him go'*)(v. 44). Once again it is the people who carry this out because the untying of bandages is work which does not require the intervention of the Divinity.

These, therefore, are the four phases of the archetypal resurrection: *'Ego credidi'*, *'tollite lapidem'*, *'veni foras'* and *'solvite eum'*.

The events we await are made clearer and more understandable when one views them in the context of these four phases. That is what we now intend to do.

We had already witnessed a less startling episode but one having a similar meaning when Jesus had

resuscitated Jarius's twelve year old daughter. *'But he taking her by the hand, cried out, saying: Maid, arise. And her spirit returned and she arose immediately. And he bid them give her to eat' (Luke 9:54-55)*

Here too, one sees that the divine operation of resurrection comes first. Then and then only, do the people do what falls to them to do: to give food to the resuscitated child. In this miracle, the work of giving food to the girl corresponds to the work of undoing the bandages in the raising of Lazarus.

The four phases of the restoration

- Ergo credidi

We cannot avoid the preliminary test of confidence. Do we consider Jesus capable of restoring the monarchy which He Himself formerly founded at Reims? Many today do not believe it. But there will always be a "few" to believe it. On them rests the responsibility, not to carry out the restoration, but to make it possible, to open the way for it. To open this way, it is necessary to begin by believing in the power and mercy of Our Lord: *Omnipotens and misericors Dominus*.

We are in a situation completely similar to that of Martha. We do not follow a magisterial doctrine either, because the restoration of the monarchy is not a truth of divine faith. If we believe in it, it is only 'of human faith'. The Church does not require us to do so, but we believe in it because reasonable proof has been given to us.

- Tollite Lapidem

There is no divine intervention before the stone has been removed. To remove the stone is to remove the obstacle which prevents God from intervening. And this obstacle is the inadequacy of our desire and prayers.

Why must we ask Our Lord, so insistently, for an intervention which He Himself announced to us and which He is longing to grant to us? Such alas is the economy of grace. It defies human logic.

To help us to accept this logic of grace, let us note that Word Incarnate Himself, for whom nevertheless the universe was created, is subjected to the necessity of "applying", that is to say, to ask for His own inheritance. *'Postula a me et dabo tibi gentes hereditatem tuam and possessionem tuam terminos terrae'* ('Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost part of the earth for thy possession') (Ps 2:8). This inheritance returns to Him by right, but to enter into ownership, it is necessary that He asks for it.

If the titular heir has to ask for His inheritance, all the more must we, who are insignificant, ask for a restoration to which we have no right in strict justice. True, it is promised to us, but it is not owed to us.

The promised Messiah must always be wished for. He would not appear in a country which would be indifferent to Him. He always needs a few who await him. It was already necessary to desire Him under the writ of the old law. The same necessity remains today for us who await His coming in majesty: He has to be desired before all episodes which are prefigurations of His "Second Coming".

In Scripture, the Word Incarnate is often called the desired of the nations. It is necessary to desire Him, Him and all whom He sends "at the appointed times" to prefigure Him and to prepare for Him. And the King of the Sacred Heart is exactly one of those.

Our Lord invites us therefore to a real ministry of desire. He gives us cause to participate,

according to our rank, in the providential government over Christendom in perdition.

What sort of activity is this ministry going to demand of us? To open the way to divine intervention, it is necessary that the sum of these desires reach the required level. To remove the stone is to remove the obstacle between Jesus and the corpse. It is also to meet the required level of desire and to allow the divine action to be exercised.

- **Lazare veni foras**

There is no possible restoration without divine intervention. There is **no human means** to resuscitate, either a four-day-old corpse, or a monarchy abolished for 200 years and loathed by a secret society organized on a world-wide scale.

We have to be persuaded that the resurrection we await is first of all God's work. It is intended to give witness **to the glory of God** as was already the case in the raising of Lazarus: *'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it'* (John 11:4). Now God is jealous of his glory: *'gloriam meam alteri non dabo'* (Isaias 42:8) (*'I will not give My glory to another'*). Or yet again, in Deuteronomy (5:9): *'For I am the Lord your God, a jealous God'*. God saves for Himself the glory of the resurrection. As a consequence, **we have to fade away before Him, so as not to take anything of His glory.**

- **Solvite eum**

After God's action, will come ours. Because ours will come too, but only later, just as it occurred with the untying of Lazarus's bandages and with the food given to Jarius's daughter. What shall we have to do then? Doubtless many things. It is even likely that *'the harvest indeed is great but the labourers are few'* (Matt.9:37). But we have no knowledge of those tasks now. They are locked away in the secrets of the future. The text says only: *'Let him go'*. This expression implies that God will give to the King of the Sacred Heart an inspiration according to the new circumstances. We shall only have to allow ourselves to be led.

Briefly then, the "greater battle", the one which has for its objective the transfer of power, is delivered by Our Lord alone. It is His personal work. And, moreover, who apart from Him could accomplish it? Indeed, it is primarily a question of depriving the Beast of his power, against which man is powerless. It is necessary at the same time to proceed to the second foundation of a monarchy of divine right. All of which can be implemented by God alone.

However, our Divine Lord, as we have seen, intends that the "few" intervene to remove the obstacle, which prevents divine action, and even, to a certain extent, to start that action.

We have called this preparatory work, "the preliminary battle"

. This work is a real battle because it has to overcome general hostility. It is this preparatory phase that we would now like to examine in more depth in so far as that is possible.

THE PRELIMINARY BATTLE

Our analysis has finally allowed us to distinguish three superimposed battles:

- that of **maintenance**, which is at the bottom and which we have for that reason called "subordinate";
- that of **supplication**, which we call "preliminary", because it opens the way, and finally

- that of **transfer**, which is the main objective and which is exclusively within the remit of divine competence.

It is the battle of desire and supplication which we will address now, in this third and last part.

Whose responsibility is this battle and who will take up the fight? It falls to "the few" who, at the same time, undertake the battle of maintenance. It needs men of action to assume the battle of maintenance, and men of prayer to participate in the battle of supplication. Let us agree that these two stances are difficult to reconcile.

We have already noted this characteristic, which is essential on the psychological level, because it explains the differences in the appreciation of priorities.

To which should we attach the greater importance, action or prayer? This is a problem we cannot escape. We cannot do anything about it: the situation is such that at the moment there is taking place simultaneously an earthly rearguard action and a preparatory heavenly battle. And it is the same people who are involved in both.

This problem of the cohabitation of the man of action and the man of prayer within the same combatant is resolved when one remembers that there is a time for everything. (Eccl. 3:2). A time for prayer which must come first and a time for action, which has to follow. A time for the "hidden life" and a time for "public life".

What is certain, it is that the battle of supplication is reserved for the "few" who preserve faith, and not only faith in the dogmatic truths, but also confidence in the promises of restoration. This confidence is necessary because the purpose of supplication is precisely to obtain the realization of these promises.

Let us see now against whom this "preliminary battle" is directed. However strange it may appear it is directed against God. It is necessary to make an assault on heaven. It is a God who must be swayed. And it is God Himself who gave us the weapons against Him. These weapons are prayer to which must be added **penance** which gives wings to prayer. Through them obstacles are removed, the stone before the grave is removed, and the divine decision to be merciful is finally taken.

Now we are mindful that this divine decision is awaited. The Husband delays His coming. All the works of Jesus Christ on earth, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, are eaten away from the inside. All that remains are only appearances and nevertheless God does not give, at least for the moment, obvious signs of indignation. That is because the level of desire has not reached the required level. God waits. Scripture tells us that he is 'slow to anger'.

Those who fight the preliminary battle are comparable to the wise virgins who put some oil in their lamps, the oil of prayer which keeps watch during the night. But the Husband always delays coming because the supplication is not strong enough. There is a grave defect here that has to be corrected. We agree gladly that it is necessary to pray, but we don't do so, at least not with the intensity which is required.

Every morning the Church repeats to us, at feet of the altar, the invocation: '*Et clamor meus ad te veniat*'. Our souls must therefore create a real "**clamour**". Perhaps one day a collective clamour but certainly an individual clamour today. But we are still far from our goal. We display only a tepid desire for it. And in this condition we contribute to the general spiritual lethargy that surrounds us.

In attempting to pierce the vaults of heaven and bring down divine power and mercy we shall not be treated any better than Our Lord. Now it was Our Lord's cry, uttered before he gave up His spirit, which pierced the vaults of heaven and brought down the Holy Ghost fifty days later. And

this cry was drawn from Him by pain. It is to be feared that our clamour will only reach sufficient intensity when it is made in response to pain. However, let us fear nothing, let us remain confident. Hardships and trials are always accompanied by their corresponding graces.

The state of extreme anxiety we suffer concerning the pervasive destruction of all of Our Lord's earthly works engenders a real spirituality, that is to say, a particular type of devotion. Because our soul is consumed by this fear which erases and surpasses all other feelings, it has become impossible for us to think of anything else, so unprecedented is the situation. Such also had to be the state of mind of Joan of Arc who sadly contemplated 'the *great pity of the kingdom of France*'.

What is the axis of this "*spirituality of combat*"? On what concerns and on which main hope is it centred? Everything finishes where it began. The ends of the most Christian realm will be an enlarged image of its origins. France and the monarchy will end in a miracle just as they began with one. It is the twofold zeal of our origin and our end which is going to order our spirituality of combat, our particular devotion at a time of crisis.

'*Iniquity has inundated the earth, it is only iniquity. To which saints shall we pray?*', Dom Caliste suddenly exclaimed this in the middle of a deep silence during the office at Cluny Abbey, in 1751, thirty eight years before the revolution. We shall pray to the saints of our origins and to those which the Church has given us as defenders. They will make us produce their spiritual fruits: St Denis, St Martin, St Rémy, St Hilary, St Clotilde, St Geneviève, St Louis, St Joan of Arc, St Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face, second patron saint of France.

As a rule we shall pray to the Holy Angels. They will communicate their desire to us for the revelation of the Word Incarnate which is called: 'Desiderium collium eternorum' (the desired of the eternal hills). The eternal hills are the angels. One calls them hills because they are elevated on high.

The angels are good guides. They do not go astray. They are not animated by their own spirit, but by the Holy Spirit. They make nothing of themselves. They await God's will of which they are content to be the messengers: '*Benedicite Domine omnes angeli ejus Potentes virtute, qui facitis verbum ejus - ad audiendam vocem sermonum ejus*' ('*Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, you that are mighty in strength, and execute his word, heartening to the voice of his orders*'). (Ps 102:20)

Nothing is more advisable today than to mix our desire with those of the new choirs of angels - strength through unity. Let us attract their attention. How do we attract the attention of the angels? We do so by being like them. One attracts the attention of St Michael by humility, which is his cardinal virtue.

The most effective devotions are those which address the Person of Our Lord, His Sacred Heart, His Precious Blood, His Holy Face: '*Show us Your Face and we shall be saved*'. His Sacred Head as seat of Divine Wisdom. Each one of us will choose whichever of these devotions we are most spontaneously drawn to.

The King of the universe has always recommended that, to reach Him, we should go through His mother, whom He established as "Mediatrice of all graces" and who participates, as Queen, in His government. The Virgin Mary is the "neck" which connects the mystical "body" with its "head". She is called "Tower of Ivory" and "Tower of David"³, because the neck is tower-shaped. In modern times, she has shown herself to chosen witnesses, showing both her solicitude and anxiety in the face of the rise of iniquity while fulfilling too, under our very eyes, the celebrated prophecy

3 [Footnote by Editor of Apropos: Solomon in the Canticle of Canticles says: 'Thy neck is as the Tower of David, which is built of bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armour of valiant men.' This perhaps should inspire us to seek from Our Lady both the weapons and the bulwark of defence in the battles ahead.']

contained in the Canticle of Canticles: *'Quae est ista quae progreditur quasi aurora consurgens, pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol, terribilis ut castrum acies ordinata?'* *'Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array.'* (C.of C. 6:a)

As for practices, we can list three which are particularly in harmony with the "spirituality of crisis" which is ours:

The practice of Holy Hour, of the Mass of first Friday of the month, and of the Communion of Reparation on five, first Saturdays of the month.

Holy Hour was instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the last hours of his earthly life. It is made on the Thursday night before the first Friday of each month. It consists of meditating on the Agony in the Garden of Olives. One can obtain great strength from this practice.

The Mass of the first Friday of the month was strongly recommended by the Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary. It is most efficacious in preparing for the consecration of France to the Sacred Heart from which one can expect a torrent of graces upon our country.

The communion of reparation for the five first Saturdays of the month was requested by the Virgin Mary of Lucy of Fatima. It has the aim of making amends, and great benefits may be obtained from observing it. These practices are certainly not easy, especially for those at work. Furthermore, it is well known that the devil is determined to prevent them. We should look forward to overcoming this opposition; it belongs to the rigours of a holy war.

Let us therefore resolutely exercise this ministry of supplication and desire which is suggested to us. It is by far the most useful thing we can do at the moment. And let us adopt the spirit of expectation which Scripture, and following from that, the liturgy asks us so often: *'Expectans expectavi Dominum'* ('With expectation I have waited for the Lord') (Ps 39:2). We have but to ask and await the appointed time.

Even God's silence must be adored, because it has its *raison d'être* which escapes us.

Three words to remember in conclusion:

Confidence, peace, and constancy...

Jean Vaquié ■