

BLACKFRIARS

SUPPLEMENT

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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MAJESTAS DIVINA

BY

ERICH PRZYWARA, S.J.

(Translated by Thomas Corbishley, S.J.)

IV. LOVE.

1.

Rising up
from the welter of all life's corruption
from the bewildering complexity of its pattern
by the Eternity and Providence of His Divine Majesty
you found a stay in instability
majestic aloofness from the seething throng.

In your flight from the sinful depths of yourself
from the yawning abyss of its hell
Mercy of the Incarnate Crucified God
embraced you in newness of life
so that God should become your Life
who are a member of His Body
crucified member of crucified Head.

God's Majesty
"shining in the face of Christ"
"whose Body is the Church"
in you member amongst other members
even as your own self.

As you decreased
ever "going out of yourself"
out of the self-perfection of creation
as you supposed it
out of your belief in the adequacy of the good will
out of your absolute self-sufficiency
your own absolute self-determination
accepting the utter helplessness of the ephemeral
your immeasurable need

of the uncovenanted grace of God
the entire dependence of the member
for its very existence
see how God increased
growing within you into your very self
as your Creator
in whom you live and move and have your being
as your compassionate Father
whose arms support you above the depths of hell
your Life
source of your life
springing up in you unto immortality
Is it not true
that His Love urges you
to give yourself to Him
that He may look on you as His own self
you on Him as yours
if only you weigh
"the benefits of Creation
Redemption
gifts to me personally . . .
all that God has done
for me
how much He has given me of His Own
and how that same Lord yearns
to give Himself to me
in accordance with His Divine Plan"
if only you reflect
"how God dwells in creatures
in the elements giving them existence
in plants giving them life
in animals giving them sensation
in men
giving them understanding and will
how He dwells also
in me
giving me existence life feeling
understanding
making me His Temple
created to the image and likeness of His Divine Majesty . . .
if you reflect
"how the Lord toils and labours
for me
in all the creatures on the earth
as if He were an Artisan
in the heavens elements plants fruits flocks

giving them existence
 keeping them in being
 giving them life and feeling . . .
 if finally you see
 "how all good gifts come down from above
 my share of power from His Infinite Might
 my righteousness goodness piety mercy . . .
 even as gleams of light from the Sun
 or waters bubbling up from their Source.

"In our Lord
 is our habitation
 seeing that He is the Fountain-Head
 the Course
 the Goal
 of all our Good."

Is it not then a necessary sequel
 of the very fact of your life
 that you be wholly His
 even as He is wholly yours
 all that is yours
 living moving having its being
 according to His Will
 since all that is yours is His
 springing from Him as Fountain-Head
 flowing in Him as its Course
 emptying itself into
 the boundless sea
 that "takes back what it never lost"
 "take Lord and receive
 all my liberty
 my memory
 my understanding
 my whole will
 all that I have and possess
 You have given it to me
 to You
 Lord
 I give it back
 it is all Yours
 dispose of it all according to Your Will
 give me Your Love and Your Grace
 that is enough."

2.

If then God the Infinite
 dwelling in all things
 working in all things

from whom come all things
 like beaming rays
 or bursting springs
 if the splendour of His Divine Majesty
 spreads over everything in heaven and on earth
 making the night bright
 making day a thing of splendour
 shyly disclosed in the golden dew of the flower
 surpassing in glory the light of morning upon the mountains
 whispered abroad in the twilight hush of eventide
 manifested in power as the roaring of the sea
 the light of promise in the eyes of childhood
 the flash of eternal day in the parting look of death
 the answer to the heart's desire
 latent in the first shy stammerings of love
 the immeasurable depths of its entire surrender
 if this Infinite God
 the eternal deeps of all that is
 has given Himself to you
 for your own
 for His Own
 that His thinking be your thinking
 His willing yours
 every throb of your being as it were
 a throb of God's own Being
 who has become your self
 since you have "gone out of yourself"
 how can it be otherwise
 than that you should "perceive and find
 God our Lord in all things
 that your intercourse with Him
 be no more an "artificial concentration and withdrawal
 but rather
 since and in so far as "you have put off
 love for all creatures
 in order to direct all your love
 to their Creator
 loving Him in all creatures
 and them all in Him
 according to His Most Holy and Divine Will"
 that your life be one endless prayer
 since "every turning to the service of God
 is all prayer."
 "When a man goes out of himself entirely
 and enters into His Creator and Lord
 having ever before His eyes
 that wherein lies his consolation

and realises how our Eternal Good
 is in all created things
 giving them being
 maintaining them in Himself
 by His Infinity and Omnipresence
 then as it seems to me
 that is a bliss beyond all bliss
 since they who love our Lord utterly
 find everything a help and a grace
 to come nearer and enter more intimately
 in growing love
 unto union with the same Creator and Lord''

this then is life's consummation
 ''not to find less devotion in exterior works of love and obedience
 than in prayer and meditation
 since we come to work
 solely for the love and service of God
 and to His Honour and Glory''

and therefore the height of prayer
 to which the formal exercise of prayer
 is but a prelude
 consists in ''finding God
 in all activities and tasks
 the spirit of devotion vitally present in all things
 since ''by continual contemplation and illumination of the mind
 the perfect recognise
 reflect on and behold
 God our Lord in every creature
 according to His Essence Presence and Power.

''The presence of our Lord in all things
 in intercourse with others
 on the road
 whatever they see taste hear and understand
 and so in all things
 since in truth His Divine Majesty is in all things
 according to His Essence Presence and Power''
 not in seeking something still to be found
 no longer ''seeking God''
 but ''finding God''
 not under the compulsion of an increased set of ''duties''
 but ''without any definite rule or order''
 as the spontaneous unconstrained breath
 of all our life and work
 so that thinking willing all exertion
 be directed to the external activity of the hand

whilst the very life of our life has become
 "to love and serve His Divine Majesty
 in everything"
 with Him in the mute togetherness of love
 watching Him
 listening to Him
 in the reverence of inexpressible nearness
 "so that the initiation of every task
 is a look to Him
 for advice
 as to the Father of all kindness and Wisdom
 He our entire confidence
 a listening to that which the Lord says
 within us
 a putting into effect
 of His inspiration"
 all activity manifesting
 exteriorly
 tireless effort
 and "an application of all human means
 with as much energy as if all success depended
 on these
 but seen
 from within
 "such a surrender to God and such dependence
 on His Diving Providence
 as if all our human means
 were utterly without meaning
 and of no avail
 living
 working
 become uninterrupted prayer
 a kneeling before His Divine Majesty
 "a constant inner liberation and elevation."
 (*To be continued*).

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

BY

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

It has been maintained that with Chaucer a light—we should call it the light of faith—was extinguished from English letters.

Though we may not agree altogether there can be no doubt that modern English writers do lack a sense of assurance. Geoffrey Chaucer is known to us for his good tempered satirising of the evils of his time and his genuine enjoyment of the commonplace things of life. Shakespeare and his contemporaries en-