

Michel Orphelin, on 'The Light of Purity', 16th July 1985

The theme of 'The Light of Purity' seems to me to be perfectly summed up in the words of the Gospel, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God,' (Matt. 5.8). When your heart is pure, you perceive the greatest light there is: God.

Pure means untainted, without pretence; pure gold, pure water, a stainless sky or a look - the look of a child for example. In another passage of the Bible it says, 'Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life,' (Proverbs 4.23). These phrases have helped me to see that purity and creative power are closely linked to each other. Our ability to create is a small portion of the creative power of God that He gives to each human being at birth, like a treasure that He entrusts to each one.

It is like a barrel or a cask filled with a precious fuel, potent with precious energy. And it's as if this reservoir has several taps: the tap of spiritual creation, of the creativity of feelings, of intellectual and artistic creativity, and the creations of our hands...and of course the tap of sexual creativity. This last tap seems to me to be the one which allows the largest quantity of the most precious energy to pass: that which transmits human life itself; that which brings us closest of all to the part of God, the Creator, the Creator of us human beings.

If one of those taps doesn't function well, or functions too well, which comes to the same thing, the output of all the other taps is affected. 'Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life' - that's more poetic than my taps! 'Blessed are the pure in heart.' A prophet of our own times, Frank Buchman, used to say, 'A heart is not pure that is not passionate.' Yes, but passionate for what? Well, that's just it - passionate to create. Life, not death; joy, not mere enjoyment; happiness, not just pleasure. Passionate to build, to re-build.

I have experienced all that I am talking about in the creation of the play, 'Poor Man, Rich Man - St. Francis of Assisi for our time'. It demanded everything that I had. I hardly ate or slept, and I, who am not particularly chaste by temperament had no more sexual desire. It was as if all of me, all my energy burned to create this play. It was a very powerful sensation. Of course I enjoyed being on stage, in spite of the difficulties of the role, but more important, I felt in harmony with God, as if He had asked me to do what I was doing, as if He were in total agreement with it, in harmony with those who worked on it with me. I felt that I was needed; all of me. It was a state of marvellous fulfilment, a state which more than made up for any difficulties or sacrifices that had been involved. I believe I literally gave part of my life to this play. But all I gave has been given back a hundred-fold in the new life that it gave to some of those who saw it.

I am a very ordinary man - as my family will confirm; a moderately gifted actor; of limited education. But the ordinary man who follows faithfully and with a pure heart the calls that God makes of him will be led sometime or another to do extraordinary things which will purify him further, and through which he will perceive the light of God illuminating the world. This is what I wish for every person with all my heart. It can be yours, if you want it.