

## FATHER CAFFAREL, A COMPANION ON OUR PATH TOWARDS GOD "BUT LOVE IS MY ESSENCE !"

### DAY 9

#### A Prophet for Our Times "Father Caffarel is a living person, who talks and teaches us"

##### *The Virgin at Home*

The whole life of the Virgin Mother, introduced by the YES of the Annunciation, was a continual ascent of love. And so, it is from her that Christian couples will learn to pronounce for the first time, and then throughout their lives, the YES which is the soul of their love. It is Mary, the humble servant of consent, who teaches their souls how to repeat and how to live the YES of the first day every day; how, in the silence of love—for Mary "kept all these things in her heart"—the burning flame of the first YES remains very much alive, a demanding flame which does not accept the ashes, but would rather devour them, in order to exist more ardently and higher. Love is only real if it perseveres. Even more: it is only true if it grows, if it becomes purer and more absolute. Its perfection is not in the joy of this YES pronounced in springtime that the lips exchanged for the first time; it is in the fullness weighed down with its fruits, at the end of the season, after much work, pain and weariness. It is the YESSES of old age in the evening of a life of fidelity, which express the perfect consent of two beings to each other and complete this union which is its work and its reward. [...]

Not only will the Virgin teach the spouses to live this mystery of the YES, of an ever fuller YES, but she will first reveal to them that no one can say YES, really, to another person if they have not first said YES to God. For whoever consents to God receives a share of the riches of divine love and can say in all sincerity: "*The strength by which I love you is no different from that by which you exist.*" (Claudel) It is the very love of God that passes through one's heart to reach another heart. May they consent more fully, may they open themselves more widely, and divine love will be a gushing, inexhaustible source in them.

If it is true to say that we must first consent to God before saying YES to another person, we must add that this YES said to the other person, renews the consent to God. Thus, to give oneself to one's spouse—for Christian spouses—means giving oneself to God and at the same time, it means transmitting to the person we love the graces we have received from God for them; to open oneself to the presence of the other person is to welcome within oneself the divine life of which they are the bearer and which they offer us; we already have it, it is true, but can it not always develop further? Love comes from God, goes to God and can only be lived perfectly in God. [...]

I suggest to couples to invoke OUR LADY OF YES. It is she, this consenting mother, if they want her intimately present in their home, who will teach them consent and who will watch over their love.

Father Henri Caffarel  
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