

WORKSHEET 11 – SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

11. Love for the Fact of Jesus Christ and love of our sisters and brothers, given by the Father

“The early Christians [...] had a lively awareness of being without any pretense to hegemony. This awareness was not based on any merit of their own and became the sign that made the newness of Christ present in the world! (Worksheet n. 11).”

Below you'll find a brief excerpt from a recent interview with Julián Carrón [“Others do not create problems for us; others make us aware of the problems we have.”](#)) and a short witness from one of our friends. Both tell us what about Christianity has fascinated them, and how this fascination is contagious for the people we meet.

“Others do not create problems for us; others make us aware of the problems we have.”*

Those who met Jesus were so surprised by what happened when they were with him that they exclaimed: “We have never seen anything like this.” They experienced such a fascination that they followed after Him. A religious sister told me that, while she was hospitalized, she saw among the nurses one who was distinct. She started to investigate and found out that this nurse was living a particular Christian experience. The same thing happened a week later with a doctor that caught her attention. This discovery led her to ask them to help her run a hospital that she was building in Ethiopia. And she justified her request saying that she wanted the Ethiopians to be able to encounter people who communicate the newness of life that is born of faith through the way they go about their work. If it is not like this, if it doesn't happen just like at the beginning, Christianity will interest no one. [...]

This is what made me get interested in the movement: it made a proposal for living Christian life in which it wasn't necessary to censure anything that happened; a way of being in reality in which I wanted to participate. The first sign that there was a change was in the way I taught, the way in which I stayed with the students in the religion class I taught in the high school. What I experienced when I first met the movement permitted me to challenge those students. I saw that what had begun to happen to me could be interesting also for others. [...]

Faith, as Giussani says, is the recognition of the presence of Christ here and now, of His presence in a human sign. And the path that Giussani proposes is fundamentally what he called the personalization of the faith. The only possibility for faith to be seen as useful is that each one can compare it with his life, that is, that life, its difficulties, its circumstances, which none of us are spared, can begin to be lived with a dignity, with a gratitude, and with a light that it did not have before. Therefore, what we attempt is to accompany each other in this process of maturation, so that the people who meet us in the environments where we are, at work, in the family, in our friendships, or in the charitable work that we do, can realize that today Christian faith is lived “in the open air.” »

* J. Carrón, “Others do not create problems for us; others make us aware of the problems we have.”, interview by Ángel L. Fernández Recuero, [jotdown.es](#), also published in English as an attachment to [Traces](#), ([tracesonline.org](#)) no. 2, February 2017.

» *Agnese is in her first year of high school. For over a month, she's been confined to a wheelchair since a difficult-to-diagnose illness has made it impossible for her to walk. She wrote the following to the leader of her GS group after an evening together:*

I wanted to really thank you for an unforgettable evening tonight.

Elena had sent me the last song that we sang, Brandi Carlile's *The Story*, when I first got sick, and it sustained me when I got out of the hospital. I tried to listen to it, but I started crying two lines into the song every time... Today, I managed. I admit, I cried a little, but I did it!! I become more and more aware of the fact that, by myself I can't do anything, but with all of you, I can! I'm only able to keep going thanks to the powerful certainty that I am LOVED!!!

Five minutes ago, one of my teachers sent me a message: "Agnese, I just wanted to thank you for the witness that you give to me and to your friends every day. Your gaze and your smile are worth more than a thousand words, but I wanted to ask if, next week or whenever you want, you could give a witness about the great faith you have, that depends on I don't know what. This is a really difficult time for me; one of my relatives committed suicide and your smile keeps me going. I don't know how you do it!"

When I read the message, I said yes right away and told her that what keeps me going is this certainty...

I just wanted to thank you; I don't know what I would've done without you!

Agnese