

## WORKSHEET CONCLUSION - SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

### Conclusion. The battle between preference and resistance: the patient waiting of God who begs for our love

*“No matter how often we say no, no matter how inadequate our response always is, He [God] never stops seeking us” (Conclusion). Below you will find an excerpt from Marina Ricci’s book, Govindo. Il dono di Madre Teresa [Govindo, Mother Teresa’s Gift]. After being away from the Church for many years, thanks to the preference she saw for herself in a group of Missionaries of Charity and in a small boy, the author was moved to recognize God’s preference for her; how He had never forgotten her. In the end, she gives in to this evidence, the evidence of a love story.*

#### “God’s Preference for Us”\*

At that point, it had been years since I’d gone to Mass. Not out of a conscious choice or rebellion, but because, little by little, quietly and unceremoniously, I had entered into that limbo where you’re neither a practicing believer nor an atheist. It was as if I had suddenly gone mute; I could no longer speak with that God whom I had loved so much. I didn’t blame him. He wasn’t the one who had disappointed me, it had been men and women. Unfortunately, that’s how it had gone. And since he had chosen the Incarnation as the way to our salvation, now that I was alone without those faces who had been his flesh and blood for me, I no longer knew where to find Him, or how to “practice” the faith. [...]

I had lost any hope or belief that life still held any big surprises for me; I didn’t trust anything or anyone. I’d locked that all inside myself; hidden first from others and, later, even from me, which meant I didn’t shed any tears over it. Sister Frederick was the first face of God I had encountered in many years.

“Sister,” I asked her, after having told her about the difficult situation I found in Shishu Bhavan, “what is better for this child? To have a family that can take care of him, with a mother and a house and everything else, or to have, without all those securities, a family that loves him?” [...]

She spoke and I cried. Not because the choice was so difficult. Not for that child, or for Calcutta. I cried over that love that I had lost, that she had instead grabbed ahold of and tightly bound to herself with a white sari bordered in blue. I cried for myself, for all the aridity, the ambitions and resignation with which I had chosen to bind my life, thereby smothering it and restricting my heart. Sister Frederick stopped speaking and listened.

“Sister, it’s as if after so much distance, God said, ‘enough is enough,’ and reached out his hand to me. But violently, as if he were grabbing me, here in Calcutta, by the hair to shake me up and make me drown in tears. I turned my back on Him long ago, but I never forgot Him. During all the years away, I never committed any serious wrongs. I may have gotten close a few times, but at the last second something always stopped me.”

Framed by her glasses, Sister Frederick’s eyes took in every tear.

“You never did anything evil,” she said, “because He loved you so much and He didn’t forget you, either.” »

\* M. Ricci, *Govindo. Il dono di Madre Teresa [Govindo. Mother Teresa’s Gift]*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo (Mi) 2016, pp. 37-41.

» Writing it down, telling the story, I don't seem to be able to do it justice, and I'm afraid of sounding ridiculous, but to what can you compare your relationship with God if not a love story, a burning passion that can drive you to do the craziest and most unbelievable things? Otherwise, how could you explain that white and blue sari, that peace in such misery, that loving caress in the face of death, the bright, shining eyes of those women in the darkness of Calcutta? [...]

The power of all the emotions, the facts and the coincidences I witnessed was so strong that I couldn't help but be suspicious and ask myself if everything that happened was really from the hand of God, or just fruit of an exaggerated imagination. I had never before felt a presence in such a concrete way. In such a violent way, as if God blindsiding me with his face, appearing behind Sister Frederick's glasses, in the paralyzed arms of a child, and the dust in the streets of an Indian city. But I was of course a journalist; I was by trade and by temperament in the habit of doubting and checking my facts. And then, I'll say it again, what happened was so violent and so obvious that it inevitably forces you to ask yourself if it was real. Each has his or her own response. As for me, I had to give in to the evidence.