

■ Taste, have the experience of the variations in the way things taste with a raisin – a classical form in psychotherapeutic approaches of full consciousness. Distribute a raisin to each person. First of all, each one takes the time to delicately hold it between thumb and index finger, observing its appearance from every angle, then bringing it close to his/her nose to smell its scent. Then, putting it into the mouth, and very slowly and calmly, eyes closed, chew it, being careful to detect its consistency and its tastes. Having finally swallowed it, keep the eyes closed to continue for as long as possible to notice its persistent taste in the mouth.

■ Try to qualify and express in words and in phrases what you have experienced.

■ Share on one or other, or on both of the texts presented.



Tasting God

“Why spend money on what cannot nourish and your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy.”

Isaiah 55:2



“We also need to learn to taste God; o yes, to taste God ... tasting God, that is to feel your heart hurting.” Founder speaks 65,3

“When the good God is in the heart, he does everything there ... when someone has once tasted God, he continuously comes back to him. It is a capital that he has in his soul and to which he is constantly brought back as to his centre. He will love to converse with him.”

Founder speaks 63,3

A door opening onto mystery

There is a paradox in the destiny of the human senses. Seeing is only human to the extent that it sees what is invisible – a face with a name, a name that is “not written on the face”, as popular wisdom knows so well. The ear becomes human only when it hears in the sound of a voice that which has no sound: a thought. It is made for what is unheard. Smell grasps the perfume of a presence; taste receives food and drink offered by our host, sealing the pacts of humanity. Touch can only experience what is solid when the ground on which it leans is without ground. Art dwells within this paradox, and this is why it has an affinity with the spiritual senses.

We can talk about a wisdom of the body, meeting up with biblical experience of the spiritual senses, since it is a matter of discovering our

humanity in the footsteps of Christ's humanity. It is true that part of Christian tradition has kept this wisdom behind a veil, reducing the senses to an enemy to be fought off. It is truly a pity, however, that so many consider that this wisdom of the body is only to be found in what comes from the East: yoga, zen... We must not despise these ways, brought to our knowledge through the flow of cultures. But they serve to introduce us to what belongs to us. And the Christian can welcome with much gratitude this invitation to move towards the transfiguration of the flesh accomplished in Christ – a transfiguration that seeks nothing other than to return to the beginnings. When the sculptor of Chartres wanted to show Adam in the mind of the creator God, he carved the face of a man right up against a face with a cross-shaped halo, sign of the dead and risen Son.

The path is very simple, as it is merely a matter of reading the biblical text: first of all, the Gospel, the accounts of Jesus' life, his words on the mountain, his parables, then Moses and Isaiah who spoke about him, what is said of Abraham whose joy was so great when he saw his day, as well as the psalms - bearers, night and day, of the hope of Israel fulfilled in him. It is a matter of allowing the text its full weight, listening to it, receiving it in silence, not hurrying on further, to the point where we feel its burden, and patiently waiting for the point when we can feel how light it really is. It is helpful to be helped, discreetly, by the images, so as not to miss out on the density of what addresses the senses. We must not be afraid to allow experiences like that of water springing out, fields maturing under the sun, the joy of arriving at the city gates revisit us, so that we can come a little closer to another

water, another sun, another city. There is indeed a struggle against the flesh, but it is not that of the one who avoids with difficulty the proud success of a spirit “freed” from the flesh. It is the patient attentiveness overcoming the weakness of the flesh that does not keep vigil with its Lord. But it is, equally, that patience which allows the promptness of the spirit heal its tendency to greediness. It must also be said that this long dwelling with the text is a marvellous school inculcating a taste for a serious work of exegesis and of theological thinking that is nourished by it.

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