

Dear Brothers and Sisters, All of You Who Have Accepted into Your Heart the Flame of Love of the Blessed Virgin!

As you well know, around this time we always pick a short section of the Spiritual Diary which will serve as a motto for the members of the Movement for the entire year. With the help of the spiritual assistants and coordinators, we have done so again this year. We chose one of the promises of the Blessed Mother, which can fill us with hope during these difficult times: **"I, the Beautiful Ray of Dawn, will blind Satan!"** (May 19, 1963)

I ask you to accept with open hearts my thoughts concerning the motto for 2021.

YEAR OF THE LORD'S MERCY

New Year's letter to the members of the Flame of Love Movement

1. Intersection of human and divine time

We often hear that modern man is a prisoner of time. Time determines our entire existence: our waking, our daily life rhythm, our feasts, the passage of the years. Geologists reckon in terms of billions of years, Olympic runners measure even thousandths of seconds. We have divided the universe and our existence within it into incalculably long or unimaginably short sections.

In Greek, the word "chronos" designates man's determined time in the past, the present and the future. But we cannot confine God into our time's limitations. *"...with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day"* (2Pet 3:8). That is why, in the New Testament Greek, there is another word for the concept of time: "*chairo*". *Chairo* indicates mostly the point at which passing human time meets divine time. *Chairo* is that moment when the Lord gives man the possibility to decide and act. Jesus uses the word "*chairo*" when He begins His public ministry: *"This is the time of fulfillment"* (Mk 1:15) This is the word by which St. Paul exhorts believers to recognize the signs of the times: "Time presses. Now is the hour to wake from sleep." (Rm 13:11)

When we celebrate the birth of Jesus year after year, do we recognize that in the stable of Bethlehem the "*chronos*" and "*chairo*", human time and the time of divine mercy, met each other? Do we recognize when "*the fullness of time*" of God's mercy comes at different stages of our individual lives? Let us just think back over the year behind us. Did we live it as a calamity, or did we see it as a gift, a time that helped us to quiet down, slowed down our headlong rushing, helped us to reevaluate our lives so that we could renew our relationship with the Lord?

It is my conviction that, in the events of the past months, it was not the punishing, but the merciful God Who showed Himself Who, as it were, held the STOP sign before humanity to make it turn away from its erring ways. He did not proclaim punishment, did not doom the world to destruction similar to the Flood, but merely stopped us: "Why are you in such a hurry? What is it that is more important to you than I am?" (cf. *Flame of Love Spiritual Diary, September 15, 1962*) He acted like the father who firmly hugs his child to himself, as that child races towards the abyss. While his arms do limit the child in its movements, his embrace is also an expression of his protective love. This embrace is calming, this embrace forces us to think, this embrace leads us to recognize: we are moving in the wrong direction, we have to do something differently. Sixty years ago, a similar realization also led Mrs. Erzsébet to write the first lines of the Spiritual Diary: "*The road on which God leads us never comes to an end, it's only that we turn away from it. I turned away.*"

When the Pharisees ask Jesus for a sign, to justify Himself, He answers: "*In the evening you say, 'Tomorrow will be fair, for the sky is red'; and in the morning, 'Today will be stormy, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to judge the appearance of the sky, but you cannot judge the signs of the times*" (Mt 16:2-3) In our days, we know the the signs of nature much better than the people of Israel did, but if we do not see divine intervention in the epidemic, Jesus would still ask the same thing today that He asked two thousand years ago: Can't you recognize the signs of the times?

At the same time, it is worthwhile comparing with this Gospel section that scene when the Lord ceremoniously enters Jerusalem and – again using the word *chairoi* – weeps over the city, because it did not recognize the *time of its visitation* (cf Lk 19:44) The term *visitation* here carries with it the emotional content that, linked to the *signs of the times* expression, acquires a positive meaning.

I believe that it is worth interpreting the present pandemic mostly in this connection. For if we see behind it the punishing God Who smites humanity, then we have not recognized the time of His grace-filled visitation. We have become captives of *chronos*, human time, and thus are unable to step into *chairoi*.

2. The Virgin Mary, Mediator of the time of grace

In the Old Testament, it is mostly the prophets who transmit God's will to the people. They call for repentance, conversion, prophesy about judgement, but it is also through them that the Lord announces the time of mercy: "*Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her sevice is at an end, her guilt is expiated*" (Is 40:2) It was in this same sense that Isaiah

made the prophetic mission he received from God known to Israel: *"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me, ... to announce a year of favor from the Lord"* (Is 61: 1-2)

Although the prophetic charisma continues to be present in the Church – we notice that the Blessed Virgin, whom the Litany of Loreto calls Queen of Prophets, has in a certain sense taken over the mission of the Old Testament prophets. This is not surprising, since Mary did not transmit one or another message of God, but His eternal Word. When the Archangel Gabriel addressed her as full of grace, and the Child was conceived in her womb, she must have become aware that the time of God's grace was becoming manifest before humanity with a power never seen before. This awareness prompted her to say the most meaningful "yes" in the history of the world: *"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word"* (Lk 1:38)

Sitting at the right hand of her Divine Son, the original meaning of the word "prophet" – "to speak in place of someone" – was consummated, because she is present in the Church no longer as a messenger, but as mediator of grace. In addition to the fact that she calls us to repentance and conversion at numerous points in the world, she does even more than this in the Flame of Love. She announces to us the time of overflowing mercy, the *chairos*: *"Through my Flame of Love, which I now pour out on the world, you will live a never before known era of grace"* (Flame of Love Spiritual Diary, July 26, 1963). Innumerable cases were documented over the past thousand years when the Blessed Virgin established contact with humanity in some form. But it provides food for thought that of all of them, she herself emphasizes the messages of the Flame of Love, when she says: *"Since the Word became Flesh, I have never given such a great movement as the Flame of Love that comes to you now"* (August 1st, 1962)

3. Are we living in the end times?

The Flame of Love Spiritual Diary does not scare us with regards to the end times, it does not threaten humanity with irreversible destruction. Although it does speak of warning signs, the nature and time of which we do not know, but afterwards the picture of a renewed future, filled with hope, is shown to us, on the basis of the words of Jesus: *"The world, darkened by the lack of faith in the soul of humanity, will go through a great shock. Afterwards, they will believe, and this shock will create a new world through the meaning of the power of faith. Through the Flame of Love of the Blessed Virgin, the trust springing from faith will take root in souls, and the face of the earth will be renewed"* (March 24, 1963)

We cannot know whether the mentioned "shock" means the present pandemic, but we cannot ignore the Apostle Paul's perception that *"where*

sin increased, grace overflowed all the more" (Rm 5:20). Precisely the enormity of sin, as well as the pandemic, should awaken in us the hope that "*chronos*" and "*chairoi*", human time and the time of divine mercy will once again be woven together through the Virgin Mary, Queen of Prophets!

Jesus gave the Apostles their mission with these words: "*As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*" (Mt 10:7) And the Blessed Virgin calls us to proclaim: "*The time is near when my Flame of Love will start to burn, and ... this will give you all great strength. Everyone whom it reaches will feel this strength*" (August 1, 1962) This strength will raise us up from hopelessness, doubts, fear, all of which the evil one plants into human hearts. Let us then proclaim the Blessed Mother's promise to the despairing: "***I, the Beautiful Ray of Dawn, will blind Satan!***" (May 19, 1963) May this be the motto of the Flame of Love Movement in 2021! Let us mark the Spiritual Diary with these words, let us print this sentence on the posters of our programs, let us meditate on this at our meetings, and let us write this into our own souls with flaming letters, to receive encouragement through it. For "*the night is advanced, the day is at hand*" (Rm 13:12)

Dear brothers and sisters, with these thoughts I wish that 2021 may be the year of physical and spiritual healing, liberation and the year of the Lord for all of us. I believe that the Blessed Virgin, who introduced herself to us as "*the Beautiful Ray of Dawn*", will finally blind and make powerless the evil one, and thereby a more beautiful, more hope-filled dawn will break on humanity. That is why I ask her, together with you, with a heart full of trust:

Mary, our Mother,
in this era of time in which we live, which is filled with worries,
in a world which has changed so much,
we ask you to bless every member of our Movement,
in particular those who are suffering the most
from the results of the pandemic.
Wipe away the tears caused by pain,
stand beside the lonely sick people,
help those working in the health care field,
that they might be witnesses to the love of your Son.

Give us strength through the Flame of your Love,
that we too might be instruments of God's healing mercy
among our sick fellowmen.
Give us brave hearts, which do not shrink from danger,
but are capable of recognizing it, of loving and of helping
every needy person during these difficult days!
May you act in us at every moment.

May the flame of you motherly love end the darkness
which the enemy of souls feeds in hearts.

Finally, permit us, asking for your intercession,
to call you by the name you called yourself:
Virgin Mary, *the Beautiful Ray of Dawn*,
spread the effect of grace of your Flame of Love over all humanity!

Győző Kindelmann
International Coordinator

Budapest, January 1, 2021