

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

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It has been recently necessary a Bishop's synod and a Popes document, (Christifideles laici) to try to define the identity of the Christian laic, but this identity has not been cleared in the intelligence and conscience of all. Actually when this "identity" topic comes up, a mixture of sentiments and resentments have been noticed, everyone is afraid to see his cultural, social, party-political and even "ecclesiastical" belongings in a light of crises (seeing that regarding this particular topic the Church is still painfully divided). I'll try to show here the trouble with simplicity, using only a brief formulation: this century, starting from the first fundamental twenties, put more and more emphasis on sad evidence than on dechristianization, which everybody talks about, and doesn't give much regard to the moral deterioration of the way of living, as directly the faith (here is why the Pope often speaks about the need for a "new evangelisation"): the undoing regards the Christian popular subject that, as such, doesn't feel more responsible (socially and globally responsible) of the truth of Christ and of the truth

that

Christ

is.

As a consequence, having not paid enough attention to this, having neglected that faith, received as a gift and became culture (impregnated the soul of society itself), every other effort of ethical restoration and of charitable engagement couldn't prevent the dechristianization of our people.

The tragedy consisted in this: that which was exploding like charity and apostolate (just think about the huge work of the laic volunteer service, the numerous socio-political engagements of Christians and all charitable engagement by religious congregations) was systematically blown away from a progressive loss of faith of all the Christian people without appreciable distinctions (devastating even the "religious" and "theological" world itself). These are historical contradictions on which one often obstinately refuses to give an answer, let this be for a sort of guilty complex that one prefers to censor.

The most pathetic attempt of remotion is the one of those who wants to attribute this "defeat" to a necessary purification action: that is that Christians had to learn to distinguish between Church and world, nature and grace, faith and reason, ecclesiastical vocation and laic vocation, Christianity and politics, etceteras. We can't demonstrate here the suicidal insubstantiality of these explications and apologies become common obstinate patrimony. These also provoked paradoxical attempts: there are those who look among the saints for some "champions of Christian laic", but when one thinks he has found them he is then forced to manipulate them in order to coincide the life and experience of this new saints with his ideologically prefabricated distinctions. If one goes then to look at the facts one notices that of many distinctions, having become a fashion today, these "saints" are completely unaware, in fact they cheerfully ignore them. And that their life is a continuous objection of who believes that "Christian laic" means to realise wise equilibriums and wise transfusions between world belonging and Church belonging. This is what we saw with regard to Saint Giuseppe Moscati, it is what happens with Pier Giorgio Frassati, who became Venerable on May 20th 1990. One of the most recent biographies that were dedicated to him practically ends with these words: "Pier Giorgio simply behaved like a laic in the Church and like a Christian in the world".

Four crossed concepts to existentially place only one person, who moreover would be very amazed by such language. The truth is that the young Frassati received his "Christian laic" in a way that is exactly at the antipodes of what some people that introduce themselves as heirs of his "memoirs" would mean or would prefer. We have no choice but to tell, going toward the proof of the facts, which demonstrate with disconcertment evidence that the term "lay" and the term "Christian" are equal in an absolute manner for the baptised person, when this man hadn't received a particular ministerial or special consecrated vocation, which require being further précised. Pier Giorgio was born in Turin on Holy Saturday, 6th April 1901 in a rich middle-class family of liberal stamp: his mother, Adelaide Ametis a well known painter; his father, Alfredo Frassati, in 1895, when he is a little older than thirty-six years old, founded the Italian newspaper La Stampa; in 1913 he is the youngest senator of the Kingdom and in 1922 is the Italian ambassador in Berlin. In short the Frassatis are at that time one of the three or four family that count in that Turin that is changing in a metropolis rich of industries and subject to massive workmen

immigrations. But if the family situation from the point of view of the social prestige is comfortable and stimulating, it is, instead, sad from the point of view of the bonds of affections. Mother and father live a difficult and very formal life, a facade kept only for dignity and for their sons: dad is always busy "somewhere else", among the big troubles of the newspaper and public life, mum repays herself with brilliant social relationships and with a rigid and cold educational system. Witnesses define her as a "modern woman, in advance of the times for her extreme ideas of liberality".

Liberality that doesn't regard her sons: Luciana, still living sister of Pier Giorgio, tells that their childhood never lived indeed, spent a "badly defined nightmare in that huge gentlemanly house that sometimes seemed "a sad barracks". During decades it's been trendy to present this saintly university youth as a model of freshness and purity, full joy of life, of physical and spiritual rigour and of rich generosity towards the less privileged, as well as of impetuous socio-political engagements. But the aspects of passion and crucifixion are been neglected and silent (those alone permit to live like "risen") that is on the daily background of his life and dead. Let's come back for now to the beginnings of his spiritual itinerary. His family passed on to him most of all a system of rules and duties (that is not actually evil, but can be rather sad), a system that through his mother referred to the comprehension of life as generally Christian, while through his father referred to a natural goodness, but void of faith. Pier Giorgio absorbed Christian life immersing himself, spontaneously and by personal choice, in the living water that the Church of that period offered him: of that Church, in which limits and troubles were not missing, he felt "part", an active member, attached to a vine like the Gospel says, in which good sap flows. One could be surprised listing all the "associations" to which Pier Giorgio wanted to be part of, often against the opinion of his family, participating actively and taking on responsibilities.

The names of these associations can seem today disused and pietistic, but they mustn't make us forget that at that time they show the living cores of a Church in ferment: Apostate of prayer, Eucharistic league, Young worshippers university students association (with the engagement of nocturnal adoration every second Saturday of the month), Marian congregation of the third Dominican order, and others. And these are only a few belongings through which he educated himself most of all to prayer, that means to possess a Christian heart, a memory, a wish, an absolute "mendicancy" of his being. We could dedicate ourselves to describe the practices and engagements that those associations involved, but the most important aspect is in observed that his person didn't loose himself and didn't shatter in thousand little pieces or in thousands devoutness, but was structured integrally so as to not leave empty, weak, or petty spaces. Most of all, everything had a centre: daily Communion. "Are you a over-devout?" somebody asked him one day at the university (believers were insulted like this at that time, from the Masonic-liberal, fascist, and social-communist". No, Pier Giorgio answered giving back the hit with goodness, but with as much firmness, no, I remain a Christian!" All that prayer generated in him a sure passion for all reality indeed and he, with the same intensity, lived the duty and the pleasure to belong equally to cultural, sporting, social, political associations, until that "popular party" that was becoming like whisper for the engagement and the identity even the political ideas of believers. In 1919, still under age, Pier Giorgio signed up to the university club "Cesare Balbo", that included also a "Saint Vincent conference". Here is the description some members give of the ambient: the club was from my point of view mouldy and not very interesting and the presence was most of all justified by being able to play bar billiards. And another: As at the "Cesare Balbo's" as at the catholic residence where we used to live, there were lots of good guys, but hundreds of them at least didn't do anything else but speak about adventures with girls while others, false and over-devout, appeared to be 'could have been' clerics. It's a good description of why we assisted during passed decades to the collapse of a kind of catholic association and to the revitalisation of a big part of parish oratory.

Frassati and some friends decided therefore to take in hand the circle. In a flier of auto propaganda they proposed themselves as responsible: Students! Do you want to modernise and give new blood to the circle? Do you want it to live above all its life and as an audacious Christian over every rancidity of the fifteen-century and pigtail? Submit the fates of it to the following colleagues: Borghesio, Oliviero... Frassati. That recent biography which we have mentioned, explains that Pier Giorgio was then with the most progressive and bore this testimony: He was always on the opposition, he didn't understand half terms, bland measures, diplomacy, also necessary sometimes to direct a boat with so numerous a crew and difficult as that of an university circle. He was an extremist, it would have wanted exactly to apply the Gospel and sometimes he was a little rough and angular. He didn't admit deviations, the arrangements were contrary to his character and he was not a malleable one. Mystery of the words: today people of this kind are defined "reactionaries and fundamentalists".

Pier Giorgio is made to pass instead as a "progressive". This is not enough for hiding an evident fact: that he has not been really an example of "laic" in the sense in which this value is spread and publicised today. It is the case therefore to sift well this typical "progressivism" that one is prepared to recognise only towards saints. We have a series of episodes available. In the September 1921 in Rome the

national Congress is held of the Italian Catholic youth, in the 50th anniversary of the foundation. There are more than young people present. The Sunday mass of September 4th is anticipated to the Coliseum, where the teams converge coming from all over Italy: every group with its flag. But the liberal-Masonic Police headquarter kept watches on horse in order to prevent the celebration and the young people were forced to return to S. Pietro Plaza, where the celebration could take place on the church square, followed then from a hearing in the gardens. When the young people in the Vatican decided to go to the 'Altare della Patria' singing the alternate song of "Brothers of Italy and "We want God", the Police headquarter decided again to disperse the procession using force. Here is a testimony that concerns our young "saint"; Pier Giorgio holds up the tricolour flag of the Caesar Balbo club. Suddenly they emerge from the front door of the Altieri Building, where there were set aside, about two hundred regal watches to the orders of the most sectarian police officer that I have never known. Cries: "Set with the muskets, remove the flags!" It seems that they have to deal with beasts. They beat with muskets, they grab, they tear, and they break our flags. We defend them, as we are able with our hands and teeth. I see Pier Giorgio taking on two guards that try to tear the flag from him. ... They push us into the courtyard of the Building that is used as a safety room... Meanwhile in plaza of Jesus the bestial show continues... A priest is thrown literally on the courtyard with his cassock torn and a bloody cheek. To our cry of protest they again set with the blows of muskets... Together we knelt on the ground, in the courtyard, when the torn priest lifted the rosary and said: "Boys, for us and for those that have struck us, let's pray!" The magazine Catholic Civilisation, in a time when things were called by their names, telling the facts explained them this way: "The sect, furious from such an unexpected demonstration of faith, wanted to make blackmail of it". And still: "The fact, owed to turbid intrigues of sect and party...". And it defines the distorted chronicles that the Newspaper of Italy and the Resto del Carlino made the work of "certain journalists more ignoble and more sectarians". The day after young Catholics had to go themselves to S. Peter's again and Pier Giorgio with his guys recrossed the city bringing in triumph the stubs of broken and torn flags to which he had hung a great poster with the writing: "Tricolour slashed by order of the Government". A "progressive" fact, as we see. However it was spoken of all over Italy.

A friend of Pier Giorgio tells: While everyone was speaking of him, he showed reluctance to the congratulations that came from every part. Those praises seemed strange to him because he could not understand as a young Catholic that circumstance could act in different way. The following year the law was declared that prohibited religious teaching in schools, just when at Catholic associative level we complained of the "deplorable disorganisation" of the students. In Turin Pier Giorgio wrote a letter to the partners of the "Militias Marie" club, which he belonged to as delegate of the students. He wrote: Our young people need a proper education for their strength and a solid apologetic base to face the continuous dangers, to which they are exposed while unfortunately attending corrupt public schools ... We who by the grace of God are Catholic we don't have to waste our lives... We have to temper ourselves to be ready to sustain the struggles that we will certainly have to fight for the conclusion of our program.

Pier Giorgio expressly asks: "continuous prayer", "organisation and discipline", "sacrifice of our people and of ourselves" and he offered the possibility of "after school activities where (the students) will complete the culture that the public schools are not able to give, they will be educated at the same time in the religious and philosophical matters". He concluded: While I am thanking you for what you will do, sure that you will be compensated largely in life, I greet you as a Christian. Hurrah Jesus! The students' delegate. Pier Giorgio Frassati. At the end of that same year the FUCI exposed in its glass showcase at the Polytechnic the notice for a night-time adoration of the Eucharist. Evidently the notice "stuck out" among the thousand motley notices that, in the other glass showcases, spoke of dances, parties and funs, and so the anticlerical ones democratically decided to tear them and the voice scattered. A friend tells: I remember Pier Giorgio, upright in front of the glass showcase with a baton in his hand, and a howling uproar among the one hundred students. Insults, threats, struck they weren't able to shift him. The greater number however, had the upper hand.

The glass showcase went into pieces and the notice was burnt. However the destruction of the glass showcase and the notices had become a vice, since the anticlerical ones punctually entrusted the Giordano Bruno's club. More than a "forge", already, spoke about the necessity to maintain good relationships and to begin negotiations. Frassati didn't allow half terms: "I shall fight. Do we not have the right to defend our glass showcase, or do they only have the right to break it? The others sustained that it was not possible however to stay there to continually keep watch, but Pier Giorgio was hasty". I say that it is needed in order to give a lesson". In another occasion, for the Easter parties, he had posted a sacred notice in the courtyard of the university. They tore it. Pier Giorgio copied it by hand and put it up again "with geometric progression", reaching the number of 64 copies. Since the beginnings of 1920 when the nervous workers started, he accompanied them as a body guard, in the red suburbs in Turin, a Dominican monk that went to talk to the young workers", among howling and threatening Bolsheviks", and not rarely, to defend him, it ended up coming to the hands. In times of political elections

he spent entire nights driving a car full of manifests, fliers and printouts and holding on the running board two big overflowing pots of glue, and "attaching" in the most 'hot' points of the city, not without undergoing aggressions and organised defences. And it will certainly not be fun. When they instigate the fascist teams, the opposition of Pier Giorgio will be so determined that his same house will be aimed at: on a Sunday, while he is having lunch alone with his mother, a team storms into the house, armed with batons of lead balls covered with leather, and start to smash the mirrors of the antechamber and any furniture they come by.

Pier Giorgio succeeds in grasping a baton and sent them running. Even the foreign press brings the news of the episode. In a letter Pier Giorgio himself tells: Dear Tonino, I'm writing to reassure you: you will read in the newspaper that we have suffered a small devastation in the lodge from some of the fascist pigs. It's been more an exploit of cowards but nothing more... They have no shame: after the facts in Rome they shouldn't let themselves be seen but be ashamed of being fascist. In another occasion to who attacked him he shouted: Your violence cannot overcome the strength of our faith, because Christ doesn't die. He suffered basically because he began to discover the weakness of that "popular party" in which he had believed. He was already enrolled to his foundation and he publicised it without fear. He was convinced that "the party would have been really popular when big numbers of faithful to the Christians professional organisations had sustained it».

A friend tells that, when Pier Giorgio spoke about it, he showed his love for it, because "it felt that it was a social result of his faith". With the beginning of fascism he was humiliated by having to ascertain the weakness and the changing of many adherent of the popular party, but unlike so many he tenaciously stayed attached to it "with the last hopes, with the last thoughts, with the last wishes". When the Manager of the 'Popolo', Giuseppe Donati, had to leave in exile, only Pier Giorgio was at the border to say good bye and to shake his hand, challenging the eyes of the fascist police. Donati in person then wrote: "I saw in him the last friend of the Country that I left". And Pier Giorgio would be dead three months later. From the social and political point of view he was afflicted by the scarce intelligence of faith of many members of the Catholic associations: that is the lack of the view of faith applied to reality with intelligent love. In 1921, participating at the national congress of the FUCI in Ravenna, he had proposed and defended the thesis of the breaking up of the FUCI to make it meet it in an ampler "Catholic youth" that united intellectuals, workers, students and simple people. He found opposition in the ecclesiastical assistant of the FUCI, but he didn't show it had been understood. He frequented the most vigorous club of workers, such as the "Savonarola", composed of metal mechanics workers of the Fiat, well situated in front of one of the more trained communist clubs. We brought, a friend tells, to the centres of religious, cultural, social and syndicalism associations... Everywhere, it can be said, Pier Giorgio was present and he co-operated and participated in every initiative... He wasn't even missing at the club of the Legionaries (of particular importance, if one thinks that the First World War had shortly ended) and at the Union of the Job, where the students met the workers. Christian identity was for Pier Giorgio opened to all ambitions, social and political, even beyond the national borders. He was indignant because France ruined "the most Catholic part of Germany"; militarily occupying the Ruhr ("it's an infamy!" he said) and he wrote a letter of protest to a German daily paper. In the same way he sustained with public declarations the struggle of the Irish people that asked for "Independence of its nation and its spirit." He had become interested in the international association Pax Roman that united the university Catholics of all nations; and he wanted to be the organiser of a conference that he held in Turin. All these indications must not make us forget that we are speaking of a university student with continuous and difficult examinations to be undertaken and overcome with at least good results, but after strenuous work. To succeed he had to apply himself for a long time, and he wasn't exceptionally gifted. Yet even his study was illuminated by charity and faith, if one thinks that among all the possibilities that were offered to him, and they were notable, given his social condition, he had preferred to enrol himself in the faculty of mining engineering, because during his sojourn in Germany he had ascertained the particular gravity of the conditions of work of the workers of the sector: "I want to help my people in the mines and I can do this better as a laic than as priest, because priests here are not in contact with the people". This was the way he explained the field of his studies that he had chosen to Louise Rahner, the mother of the famous theologian, in who's house he sojourned for a certain time. He said he wanted to become "a miner among the miners". There is another aspect of his life that we have to describe, a more known one, but that now, in the amplest picture that we have delineated, it finds its correct position. It deals with that "voluntary service of charity" to which Pier Giorgio constantly devoted himself, emerging himself in the liveliest tradition of the social saints of his country (Don Bosco, Cottolengo, Faà di Bruno, Murialdo, and Orione). Here is a delineated sketch from G. Lazzati, to commemorate the 50° anniversary of the birth of Pier Giorgio: Estranged the men, beginning from his relatives, they will see this youth to whom nothing seemed to be missing in order to be a champion of worldliness (...) to drag through the streets of Turin wheelbarrows full of the poor mens household implements looking for houses, and to sweat under the load of big packages also badly packed, and to enter the bleaker houses where poverty and vice go to-

gether, under the hypocritically scandalised eyes of a world that does nothing to help them better themselves; and to make himself, with amazing humility, he, the son of the Italian ambassador in Berlin, he, the senator's son, solicitor for the poor, and for them to remain without a cent for a tram to get back home, but returns home at all hours of the night... His sister Luciana has revealed that the situation was more humiliating than can be imagined: at home Pier Giorgio passed as a fool and they kept him short of money: to be able to give to the others, he often had to deprive himself not only of the superfluous but of the necessary. What he did for the numerous poor families, of whom he took care of as a member of the "Saint Vincent", results from thousand of episodes full of charity and from thousand thankful testimonies. It was not therefore, a dull charity: "to give is beautiful he said, but still more beautiful it is to put poor men in condition to work". He knew well that charity was a matter of social justice indeed". It was discussed; a friend narrates, of certain agricultural pacts. He sustained that the land belongs to the farmers and it must be given to who works it. Impulsively I exclaimed: 'But you that owns fields, would you do it?' He looked at me and he told me in few words: They are not mine...I'd do it immediately!».

The conscience, with which meanwhile he acted, lightening, as he was able to, the misery of the poor, with his own sweat, emerged when he had to convince others to participate in his exploit. A friend tells: One day he tried to convince me to take part in the "S. Vincent". My difficulty was that I didn't have enough courage to enter the dirty and malodorous houses of the poor, where I could catch some illness, he in all simplicity answered that to visit the poor was like visiting Jesus Christ. He said"; around the crippled, the miserable one, around the wretch I see a light that we don't have..." that visiting poor men hovels was possible to get some serious illness was not a way of saying. And in fact Pier Giorgio became ill in a terrible way: despite that he was physically tempered by sport, he contracted fulminating polio during one of his "visits», that killed him in a week. It was a week of passion. Before briefly telling this, let's see the image again that has been handed down of this university youth: "bourgeois", open, healthy, jovial, a passion for the mountain and of skiing, noisy at parties, animator of a healthy goliardy (he had founded a " Society of the Left Types" with a proper statute). All of this was not just appearance but in his nature. Yet, this same nature, without dissociation's, without highs and lows, without changing of character, it was also deeply tempered by his and others suffering. Among them a lacerating suffering, we have also to remember the deep love for a girl of humble conditions, love to which he morally felt forced to abdicate when he realised that his choice, for the prejudices of the family, it would have never been approved. He understood that a possible insistence of his would have provoked the definitive breaking of the bond between him and his parents. God suggested, in the depth of the heart (and we owe to interpretative the episode considering his entire brief life; without knowing it, Pier Giorgio was already a step away from death) not to seek his happiness at the price of the salvation "of his parents": " I cannot destroy a family, he said, to form another one. I will sacrifice myself".

On June 30th 1925, returning from his usual turn of charity, Pier Giorgio started to accuse migraine and inappetence. Nobody minded him: in those days his old grandmother was dying, and that big guy tall and muscular, who no one ever minded or took notice of because he was such a good person, with his inopportune fevers was just annoying. Pier Giorgio started to die, feeling his young body being destroyed, while the progressive and implacable paralysis advanced, without anybody minding him. The dying grandmother continued to polarise the attention of the family, causing physical tiredness and psychological wearing out of all the family. Pier Giorgio was kindly made to understand not to annoy them with his slight illness, when there were already enough troubles in the house and when he would have done better to study for his last examinations that had been dragging on for too long. So Pier Giorgio, humble and obedient, faced alone the symptoms of this terrible illness, the gravity of which he didn't entirely realise, and the agony of what was happening to him, without even being able to speak of it, since every attempt to do so was stopped with unknowing cruelty. When the petrified parents realised what was happening under their eyes, it was too late. The serum made hastily and exceptionally in the Pasteur Institute in Paris arrived when it was too late to be of any benefit. On the last day of his life, Pier Giorgio asked his sister Luciana to take a box of injections that were in his study to one of his poor men because he had not been able to do so, he wished to write the necessary indications and address. It is a note that visually expresses the tragedy: he wanted to write it, at all costs with his own hand which was already tormented by the paralysis, and an almost inextricable tangle of lines and letters are the results. It is his will: his last energies for his last act of charity.

The funeral was a hasten of friends and in particular of poor men; the first to remain astounded, to see so many that loved him and so many he had known, it was his relatives that for the first time understood where Pier Giorgio had really lived in his short years of life, despite he had a comfortable and rich house to which he used to return to, never on time. The most unusual and unexpected commemoration post mortem is the one that the famous socialist Phillip Turati dedicated to him. He wrote in his newspaper: He was really a man, that Pier George Frassati, that death seized at 24. What we read of him is so new; unusual that it fills with reverent amazement even those who didn't share his faith. Young rich, he

had chosen for himself work and kindness. Believer in God, confessed his faith with open demonstration of cult, conceiving it as a militia, as a uniform that is worn in front of the world, without changing it, with the usual suit for convenience, for opportunism, for human respect. Convinced Catholic and partner of the university Catholic youth of his city, mistrusted the easy sneers of the sceptics, of the vernaculars, of the mediocrity's, participating in religious ceremonies, making processions to the canopy of the Archbishop in solemn circumstances. When this and calm and fair demonstration of his own belief and not an exhibition for other purposes, it is beautiful and honourable. But how can we distinguish the "confession" from the "affectation"? Here is life and the comparison of words and of external actions that are worth little more than the words. That young Catholic was indeed a believer. (...) Among hate, haughtiness and spirit of dominion and of prey, this "Christian" that believes, and operates as he believes, and speaks as he feels, and acts as he speaks, this "intransigent" of his religion, is also a model that can teach something to everybody. Perhaps Turati even suspected that the conclusive words used by him to describe a convincing Christian secular ("He acts as he believes, he speaks as he feels and acts as he speaks") these are about those that the Church uses when it consecrates its ministers: a question of "priesthood" in fact. And the Christian laic are also priests in the power of the same baptism. There is another observation that is necessary to be made before concluding. Often one hears a question (that burns above all the hearts of the Christians that live in Piedmont): why is a land that was so rich of social "saints" up to the end of the last century, today so dechristianize? What has happened? Where is their inheritance was it not accepted and lived? Beatifying this last young laic from Turin, the Church seems to give an answer: it needed (it needs) to be welcomed this inheritance of Pier Giorgio Frassati (and today it could be" the favourable moment").

The holiness of Pier Giorgio expresses in fact a value of continuity with the tradition of his land and a value of novelty: and this is his function of "zipper" (in the passage of an age) that is necessary to know how to accept it. On one side he has inherited the purest tradition of the Piedmont's saints: he engaged in their immense work of defence of the faith, through the profuse charity in the field of the immarginalisation, produced at the time by a rising industrial-urban context. On the other side, he has however pointed out the novelty: the necessity that faith is compared in the arc of human experience and it "benevolently operated" in every ambit: in the environments of the university, of work, of the press (Pier Giorgio collected subscriptions not for his father's daily paper, but for the Catholic one), of political and party engagement, and wherever it was necessary to defend social liberties, always trying to conceive and to foment the associations, as "Christian friendship" destined to the birth of a social Catholicism. While the age of the mass Christianisation was opening and documenting itself, Pier Giorgio realised that it was necessary to reopen the matter of the relationship of Faith-Operate: this was traditionally applied to charity – assistance - moral fields, it was necessary to extend it to all the operate of man (from economy to sport!), without accepting limitations and pre-determined spaces.

This splendid confession of his remains: Each day I understand what a grace it is to be Catholic Living without faith, without a patrimony to be defended, without sustaining a struggle for the Truth is not to live but to scrape a living... Also through every disenchantment, we have to remember that we are the only ones that possess the truth. In an age of sad dechristianisation, in an age of new and cheerful evangelisation we need men like this: "convinced": laic, that is Christians: that means saints.