

(English translation)

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Chiara answers a question and tells about her vocation

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“Chiara, how did you feel at the beginning when you were alone?”

I don't remember when the very first idea of this Ideal came to me; but I remember something that I can tell you about. At home, I had three siblings, rather a brother and two sisters. My brother studied at college; my sisters instead, studied very little, in the sense that they didn't like to study and they didn't go to high school. My mother always let me study. She said, "We have to let Chiara study so she can pass the exams".

One cold winter morning, cold, cold, icy cold - I don't remember if there was snow, I think there was - my mother said to my little sister. "Listen, we need milk." We had to walk two kilometers to buy milk, and it was so cold outside – you really freeze in Trent! And so my little sister said: "I don't want to go; it's too cold!"

Then my mother turned to my other little sister. They were really good... but you know how it is. My mother said: "You go, because Chiara can't go, she has to study." But my other little sister said: "Oh Mamma, I don't want to go!"

Something inside of me told me that I should go. These things always come from God, you know... good ideas come from God. And I said: "I'll go." So I took the bottle and went to fetch the milk. When I had gone about a kilometer, perhaps a little less than a kilometer, as I was walking down the road on my way to get the milk and precisely because I had made an act of love (when you love, God enlightens you within, when you love, God manifests Himself).

At a certain point, I felt that I had to stop because God was speaking to me. But, I repeat, He wasn't speaking to me with a voice but in my heart. This is what He said to me, more or less: "You have only one life, spend it well. Give yourself completely to me. Leave everything and come with me. Give yourself completely to me!"

I remember that I stopped because of this very strong inspiration and I looked up towards heaven, as if the voice had come from heaven, and I said: "Yes."

Then I went home and wrote a very ardent letter to my spiritual director saying: "I feel that God is calling me. God is calling me to give myself completely to Him." So he said: "Wait, we'll see what we can do". He consulted another priest, because he said: "She's young, she might change her mind, you never know." But that letter was so ardent, so inflamed with the love of God, that the priest, my spiritual director, replied to me: "Alright. On such and such a day, come to church alone early in the morning, at six, and I will consecrate you to God for the rest of your life."

On that morning, at six, there was a rain storm that you can't imagine. I didn't say anything to anyone, because my mother and brother were beginning to say: "Now Chiara is a little older, she should begin to think of getting married. Maybe we should help her to open her eyes. She doesn't think of these things; maybe we should introduce her to someone so she can get married."

I knew about these ideas and so I kept quiet. I took the umbrella and went towards this church, which was on a hill, in Piazza Cappuccini. And it seemed that the devil was against me. Because he knew that I was beginning this Movement and he didn't want to let me go ahead. I held the umbrella like this, you know, against the storm that was coming against me, against me, against me. And it was so hard to

walk up the hill to the church! I thought: 'This is the devil; the devil is here and he doesn't want me to do this. But I went ahead.'

When I reached the church, I was really tired, exhausted. I went into the church and it was completely empty. On the altar there was a statue of Mary: Our Lady of Lourdes. The priest came and began to put on the vestments for Mass. Right in front of the altar, beyond the altar rail, he put a small kneeler; he asked me to kneel there and then said to me: "I will turn to give you Communion; before giving you Jesus, when I raise the Host, say these words to Jesus: 'Jesus I am yours forever'."

I was there at the altar and I had my little missal, which had been given to me as a gift – a beautiful missal, in Latin and in Italian. Before the priest began to celebrate Mass, I hadn't completely realized the step I was about to take, that is, I hadn't understood that I was leaving all the world behind me and that I would no longer be able to go back, because I was consecrating my life to God forever; because I had understood that it was worthwhile, because I had only one life and God was calling me to do this.

When the priest came to the point of the elevation of the Eucharist, I began to understand. I thought: 'It's as if a bridge has fallen behind me: I can no longer go back. For me, everything is ended. I can no longer form a family; I must leave my parents; I will have to leave everything. I will have to be poor; I won't be able to have my own money; I won't be able to have anything anymore. I will belong only to God, only to God, only to God! And what will God do with me?' Because there was nothing, understand? There was no one.

The priest had questioned me the day before and had taken the part, as they say, of the devil, in the sense that he was like the "devil's advocate", to test this vocation. He said to me: "You will remain alone! Your brother and sisters will get married and have a family, and you will be left alone. What will happen to you?" He said these things to test me. But I didn't know that priests tested, and I was frightened. When he said: "You will be left alone", and I didn't know that the Movement would begin, I said: "Listen, Father, for as long as there is a Tabernacle with Jesus in the Eucharist, I will never be alone!"

And so he concluded: "This girl has the vocation".

So, when we were there at the altar, after the elevation, I understood clearly that I could no longer turn back and that, for me, now, there was God alone. So what did I do? I remember that in that moment I realized it, whereas before I hadn't realized the great step I was taking, because the Movement didn't exist, there wasn't anything; there was God alone for me. I remember that a tear fell on my missal because I understood that there was no longer anything for me: God alone.

But I didn't know God very well, as I know Him now; I was a little weak, understand? But when the priest turned towards me, the tear had already disappeared and I pronounced that formula and said to Jesus: "I am yours forever."

So this is the answer to what I did when I was alone.

And remember this, *popette*: why did God send me that inspiration? Because I had made an act of love: I had gone to buy the milk in the place of my sisters. And because I had gone to buy the milk out of love, the Lord sent me that inspiration. So this tells us that all our strength lies in loving. If we want to make a revolution in the world, we must love, and if we love we'll have all the inspirations we need on how to conquer the whole world.