

THE WORK OF CAFH

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INTRODUCTION

“Cafh is a reunion of souls who seek their inner liberation through an exterior individual method.” (*Rule of Cafh*)

The Cafh reunion of souls unfolds in accordance with its Rule, which consists of three parts: Rule, Method and Ceremonial.

When, with the aim of spiritually unfolding, we adopt a method adequate to our characteristics and life situation, and follow it with fidelity and attention, we become predisposed to achieve that unfolding.

In the text that follows, we present the antecedents, fundamentals and basic concepts of Cafh, and Annual Messages on the Mysticism of the Heart.

The Antecedents and Historical Outline of Cafh place in context the norms, nomenclatures and symbols found in the Rule, the Method and the Ceremonial.

In *The Fundamentals of the Work of Cafh* we synthesize the organization, the fundamental ideas underlying its conception of unfolding, as well as the doctrine and aspects of spiritual counsel. The doctrinal aspects expounded represent the viewpoint of Cafh’s teaching about life and the world.

The Basic Concepts of Cafh’s doctrine

Both *The Fundamentals of the Work of Cafh* as well as the *Basic Concepts*, explain the tools made available to Cafh’s members for furthering their development.

The *Annual Messages* on the mysticism of the heart describe possible ways to follow towards divine union.

The goal of this course is to invite all Cafh’s members to better know Cafh’s fundamentals, to meditate on and study its doctrine, and become actively engaged as much in their own efforts for unfolding as in those for expanding Cafh’s work.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE WORK OF CAFH

1. ANTECEDENTS AND HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF CAFH

If we were to seek the most ancient of Cafh's forerunners, we should have to comb in Egyptian lore, in that wisdom's influence upon Greek initiatic and philosophic schools, in that knowledge's insertion into Judeo-Christian culture and in the work of the Secret or Esoteric Orders, especially that of the Orders the Christian knights founded at the time of the first Crusades, when they came into contact with the sages of the East. Down through the centuries, these Orders conserved and transmitted, within the context of Western thought, the fundamentals of the ancients' knowledge and what had been revealed to beings of great spiritual development.

The Orders' end in view was to stimulate their members' spiritual unfolding in particular and boost human advancement in general. In the 18th Century, before the French Revolution, these Orders divided between the supporters of the monarchy and those favoring the liberal ideas. The first were closed, hermetic. The second promoted social, political and ideological changes; to a large extent, they forged the societies of today.

On the other hand, within the Orders were groups centering their work on the spiritual unfolding of the individual. Their members were small in number; the instructor-disciple relationship was direct, personal, and they worked in a way unknown to the world around them.

Cafh's closest antecedents date back to these groups of spiritual labor, whose teaching was principally influenced by Christian asceticism-mysticism.

Cafh's history, such as we know it today, begins when Santiago Bovisio—Don Santiago—, an Italian emigrant, arrives in Argentina and commences his untiring spiritual labor.

Don Santiago was born in Bergamo, Italy, September 29, 1904. His formal schooling was in Vigevano and religious studies in the Passionist Congregation of Turin. In Venice, Don Santiago belonged to an Esoteric Order, which he called *The Order*, whose members, as he told it, disappeared almost in their entirety during the devastation of the Second World War. In that Order he took up studies on asceticism-mysticism. Upon finishing them, he set out for America with the purpose of carrying out a spiritual work. He arrived in Buenos Aires in January 1926.

In Buenos Aires, Don Santiago married and formed a family with Amelia Taccagni, who accompanied him throughout his life.

During his first 10 years in Argentina, Don Santiago strove to spread his vision of spiritual life. He gave talks, wrote in publications and organized activities for human advancement; by 1937, he had already met some persons willing to accompany him in the spiritual work he yearned to offer society. Together with them, he formed Cafh's first group.

The word *Cafh* has ancient roots and several meanings; for example, it's the eleventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It also appears in the Tarot as the card Strength, symbolized in the figure of a woman holding closed a lion's jaws.

For Cafh members, the word *Cafh* symbolizes the soul's effort to reach union with God. At the same time, it represents the divine presence in each soul.

In Cafh's history, from 1937 to 2005, one can distinguish various stages.

First Stage

The first stage stretches from its founding on March 3, 1937, till May 1948. During this time, Cafh was governed by a provisional rule prepared with the idea that Cafh's membership would be limited in number.

This stage's most important milestone was Don Santiago's election as Grand Master Knight of Cafh, October 28, 1945.

All through this phase, we Cafh members used the criteria of carrying out an individual, spiritual, inner work, and remaining unknown to society, criteria similar to that of the European Order Don Santiago had come from.

Cafh's teaching, transmitted by Don Santiago, gave its vision of spiritual unfolding, human becoming, the great religions, and Christian asceticism-mysticism, along with the traditional teachings of the esoteric schools concerning the astral and mental worlds. The asceticism-mysticism was based on prayer, meditation, self-control and the practice of upright actions.

Second Stage

The second stage extends from 1948 up to Don Santiago's death in a 1962 car accident. We can discern two periods in this stage.

The first period covers 1948 until 1955.

In 1948, we members of Cafh adopted a permanent Rule. This Rule sets up three categories of members so as to respond to people's characteristics, the way they want to lead their lives and the commitment they wish to have with Cafh's work in accordance with their vows. These categories are the Ordained, Solitary and Sponsored. With the adoption of the 1948 Rule and the creation of the categories, Cafh ceased being a Secret Order. The Community and Retreat houses, the creation of institutions and works sponsored by Cafh, made its existence explicit. Moreover, Don Santiago exhorted transmitting Cafh's ideas to society and admitting into Cafh all those desiring their spiritual unfoldment.

The first Ordained Table was comprised of women living in community. It was founded in Embalse, Argentina, November 6, 1949. This community began a school and took care of retreats for Solitary category members. On June 13, 1953, in La Plata, Argentina, the first Ordained Table of men living in community was founded. Three years later, in 1955, there were already 39 Ordained in Argentina, 22 of whom lived in Community and 17 in their private residences, and there were 17 Solitary or Sponsored Tables.

As for its teaching, Cafh conserved the European Esoteric Orders' legacy in some of its ideas, in its symbology and ceremonial; besides it kept the traditional nomenclature of the Christian Orders of Knighthood. To the previous-1937-1948-period's teachings, Don Santiago added ones on theology, philosophy, human history and, especially, presented the idea of renouncement as the substratum underlying Cafh's teaching.

Furthermore, in the course *The Good Road*, he gave with simple and clear terms a practical approach to spiritual unfolding and asceticism-mysticism.

From the spiritual point of view, we could call this period one of drawing within. It was a time dedicated to inner life, meditation and prayer both for our own benefit and the world's. We contributed to the common good by distancing ourselves from daily vicissitudes in order to achieve serenity and discernment, and thus collaborate beneficially in the work necessary for the milieu in which we moved.

The second period covers 1955 to 1962.

Don Santiago proffered the teaching through his writings in general, and in particular, through his Annual Messages and his life example.

Though indeed Don Santiago founded Cafh inspired by the tradition of the European Orders, from the very first moment he stated—and in 1937 wrote it in the course *Spiritual Unfolding*—that we were entering into a new epoch, that great changes would be occurring in society, that possibilities never dreamed before would be discovered, and he urged us to look ahead. Based on this vision and the inner work already carried out by Cafh's members, the 1956 Message steered our mystic path of introspection and prayer towards a broader approach that embraced society and the human condition: he urged us to participate. He taught us that participation with souls—with all souls—is the essence of love.

The 1957 Message exhorted us to realize and transmit the idea of renouncement and made the meaning of participation more explicit by explaining its two senses: on the one side, to participate sharing with others the spiritual wealth we discover through our understanding and our experiences, and on the other, to participate learning what we find good and applicable in the new ideas and discoveries appearing in society.

The 1960 Message contextualized the Mysticism of the Heart, saying we'd have to support it on a rigorous knowledge base, to be able to evaluate our inner experiences and our beliefs with greater clarity, since the evaluation we might make basing ourselves only on our subjective experiences tends to judge with more weight our received impressions than the facts just as they take place.

The 1961 Message further clarified this approach for us, pressing us to distinguish between faith and the comprehension of what is certain, to not confuse truth either with subjective mystic experiences or with theories about supernatural life. In this way, he prompted us to apply scientific method, especially the concept of verification, to spiritual life.

As for the teaching, Don Santiago thought there was no longer an esotericism (knowledge accessible only to the chosen or initiated), that what was considered esoteric knowledge had already been divulged and was within everyone's reach. He likewise said that what were denominated esoteric teachings must answer to scientific rigor, that those which couldn't be proven would have to be taken only as theories which were possible, but not definitive. He taught us, moreover, that advancement in scientific knowledge not only was not opposed to religious and spiritual ideas, but rather broadened and underpinned them.

For Don Santiago, faith did not consist in asserting that this or that belief is certain, but rather in the deep certainty that one, as a human being, has in oneself the capacity to

bring innumerable possibilities into actual being and to respond to life's fundamental questions. This is the spirit of Cafh's teachings: they are offered to us as raw material to work on, not as articles of faith.

Don Santiago explained to us that Cafh is an idea and a work open and adequate to the new times he anticipated, in which knowledge would be accessible to any person whatsoever, without restrictions.

During this period, the number of Cafh members continued to increase. In 1962, there were 42 Ordained living in their private residences, 24 Ordained living in community, and, between the Solitary and Sponsored Tables, there were 32 Tables in Argentina, five Tables in Brazil, one Table in Chile and one Table in Venezuela.

Third Stage

The third stage extends from 1963 until 2005, and in it can be distinguished four periods.

The first period covers 1963 to 1976.

On May 8, 1963, Jorge Waxemberg was elected Grand Master Knight II of Cafh.

Jorge Waxemberg was born on July 14, 1929, in Tucumán, Argentina. He went to college in Rosario, earning an architect's degree in 1952. Entering Cafh in 1947, he joined in founding the first men's Community Table, and lived in community till his election as Grand Master Knight II.

Jorge Waxemberg received from Don Santiago, from 1953 until the latter's decease in 1962, spiritual counsel and instruction about religions, mystical asceticism and fundamental concepts of Cafh's teaching. Furthermore, he accompanied Don Santiago in his frequent trips assisting the work of Cafh, including the three month journey Don Santiago made to meet Cafh members in Brazil and take care of personal affairs in Italy.

During his term as Grand Master Knight II, Jorge Waxemberg became one with Cafh's members' efforts in expanding Cafh's work, and especially, with those who were willing to move with their families and communities to distant locales so as to bring Cafh's work to other peoples of the world. As a result of this joint work, by 1976 there were more than 200 Ordained, 150 Tables between Solitaries and Sponsored in 15 countries, and two family communities of married Solitary Sons and Daughters, both in Argentina, one in Santa Fe and the other in San Ignacio.

The second period covers 1976 to 1992.

In 1976 in Argentina, a political change of momentous social significance took place. A military dictatorship which exercised power over the next 7 years set itself up. The loss of freedom of assembly and speech, added onto the persecution and assassination of those not submitting to the repression, appreciably affected the work of Cafh's members in Argentina. The military forces settled into the properties of the Embalse and San Ignacio Communities, took control of their institutions, cut back their means of livelihood, and closed their schools. The married couples' communities of Santa Fe and San Ignacio also had to close down. Though indeed some Ordained from those Tables emigrated to Communities in other countries, in Embalse and San Ignacio Ordained did stay on, continuing their community life in spite of the military occupation and the

difficult circumstances they had to face. These Cafh members were true pioneers of the communities in Argentina.

The Argentine Tables' reunions and activities continued taking place within the limitations typical of the situation the entire population was suffering through, with those carrying them out sometime risking their lives to do so. Many of those reunions had to be held privately, each Cafh member in their own home, following the reunion's schedule and themes. Those members who answered their calling with such courage and strength were likewise pillars propping up Cafh's work in Argentina.

In 1983 democracy returned to Argentina. Cafh's activities started up again with renewed fervor in that country, and the communities of Embalse and San Ignacio flourished once more. They concentrated their labors on recovering their means of livelihood, repairing the facilities which had become very run-down, and especially, in taking care of retreats for Cafh's members, both in the houses for that purpose within the community properties as well as in those located elsewhere in Argentina. By this time there were already several other Communities in various countries. As for the married couples' Communities, conditions did not offer such as to make their reactivation viable.

A very important milestone of this period was the admission of women to Ordination, outside of Community.

Up until 1988, Cafh's women members became eligible for Ordination only within the Tables of Ordained living in Community. From this date on, Solitary Dames were admitted to the Ordination.

The third period extends from 1992 to 1999.

In 1992 the Grand Master Knight II integrated Master Dames into the Mother Table of Cafh. It was the first time Ordained Dames had given the Eternal Vow of Union. This event is of great relevance for Cafh, not only because of the inclusion of women in Cafh's hierarchy and administration, but moreover because of the Master Dames' positive influence on the thought and the Work of Cafh.

The endeavor of expanding Cafh's work continued throughout the years, impelled by the untiring dedication of both the Ordained living in their private residences and the Ordained living in Community.

The Grand Master Knight II team-worked with the members of Cafh's Mother Table in order to tend to all Cafh's affairs, both with regards to attending to its members, and to its works, teachings and fundamental ideas for expounding and developing the work of Cafh. This team forms part of the greater team made up by the Delegates, Assistants and members of all Cafh's Tables. The interaction of these teams and the assistance of the Masters¹ provide the feedback that nourishes, enriches and directs the work of Cafh.

On the groundwork of this feedback were based the teachings on spiritual life and the guidelines for the unfolding of Cafh's work, the annual Messages and the addresses the Grand Master Knight II gave to the Full Moon Assemblies.

Besides the themes of renouncement, prayer and ascetic exercises, the teachings deal with that of relationships as the substratum of unfolding in all realms. They integrate

¹ See: The Mother Idea

the idea of relationship to those of group work and teamwork, as an effective means for participation in all aspects of life. Furthermore, they associate this concrete participation with the process of spiritual unfolding and the evolution of the notion of being. In the 2002 Message we read: “We have no grounds for thinking our relationship with God could be better than that we have among ourselves. The mysticism we could experience cannot be of a nature different from the relationship we have with that humanity we are part of.”

The teachings also define the principles, postulates and doctrine of Cafh.

The Annual Messages exhort us to make a science of spiritual work, to apply good discernment in evaluating subjective experiences, to keep ourselves open to new ideas and advances in knowledge, to harmonize what we know with our way of living and our priorities. They also convey to us the idea of continuously renewed realization as contrasted with the ideal of a final realization. They explain that nothing in life is final, that grasping that each moment contains a possibility which awaits being converted into reality, plants us squarely in the here and now, and that the eternal present is the only field we have in which to unfold ourselves. Likewise, the Messages exhort us to live the Mysticism of the Heart and detail this process of expansion of consciousness in the light of the ten words of spiritual unfolding. The Mysticism of the Heart isn't reserved for special beings, but is rather inherent to the unfolding of every one of us.

The addresses deal with several themes. With regard to authoritarianism in personal relationships and in the task of giving counsel, they exhort us to respect individual freedom in personal decisions. With respect to conflict prevention and anticipation, they exhort us to acknowledge the diversity in human life and to harmoniously integrate the differences. With respect to the prototypes and archetypes in the vision of the ideals we yearn to realize, they prompt us to achieve spirituality free of pre-set ideas, open to the mystery of the unknown. As for the Work of Cafh, they invite us to let it be more the result of our lives than of our words, that it be the expression of our unfolding.

The fourth period extends from 1999 to 2005.

The 1999 Plenary Full Moon Assembly approved changes to the 1948 Rule so as to adapt it to the different characteristics, situations and life styles of Cafh's members, and to the changes society had undergone during the more than 50 years that Rule was in force. The 1999 Rule was worked out by the GMK II in conjunction with all the Ordained.

A very important change set up since 1999 was establishing that the Solitary and Sponsored Tables comprise a maximum of 42 members, and that the Ordained Delegates of those Tables do not pertain to them, but rather to a Table of Ordained. Until then, the Ordained Delegates of Solitary and Sponsored Tables pertained to the Tables they assisted, and hence, those Tables comprised a maximum of 43 members.

This disposition is of great moment owing to the possibilities it held out for the Ordained in charge of Tables. Up till then, the Table Delegates were relatively isolated and didn't form part of a group of peers, such as occurs in the groups of all Tables.

At the start of 2005, there were 56 Ordained Tables, and 420 Tables between Solitaries and Sponsored, in 21 countries.

In this period was established the Seminary of Ordination for Knights and Dames of Solitary Tables. Thus began the systematic formation of the future Ordained living in their private residences.

The GMK II also proposed a procedure for keeping the Rule updated. This proposal was approved in the 2003 Assembly, and gave as a result the approval of amendments to and scopes of the Rule's provisions.

Based on the scope given the term "lifetime" with respect to the role of Grand Master Knight or Dame, as approved in the 2003 Assembly, Jorge Waxemberg announced in the 2004 Assembly that he would retire the coming year from his office as Grand Master Knight.

Jorge Waxemberg retired from that office on the 22nd of May, 2005.

Fourth Stage

On May 22, 2005, José Luis Kutscherauer was elected Grand Master Knight III of Cafh.

José Luis Kutscherauer was born in Cruz del Eje, Cordoba Province, Argentina, on August 12, 1943. He graduated from the University of Cordoba as a medical surgeon. He joined Cafh in 1961, and in 1973 entered the Community of San Ignacio in Cordoba, Argentina, where he fulfilled several roles till 1979.

In 1977, during the military take-over of the Argentine Communities, he was appointed to deal with the person named as their official supervisor. He took charge of carrying out the various negotiations, visits to the Communities' Stability Radius and helping their members throughout the military intervention process. In 1979 he transferred to Costa Rica where he was named Delegate of the Ordained Community Daughters until 1989 and of the Ordained Community Sons until 1997. He was also Country Delegate for the Sponsored and Solitary Tables of Costa Rica from 1983 till 1992.

From 1979 onwards he joined in the social work begun and kept up with the resources generated by the Costa Rican Communities. He was elected director of these activities until 2005. Within the Communities' zone of influence, he focused the social aid towards the following areas:

- Teaching adult literacy.
- Opening a free medical clinic.
- Giving family counseling for neighbors and employees.
- Collaborating in the carrying out of public infrastructure works in the neighboring towns, such as paving 25 kilometers of roadway, building bridges, bringing electricity throughout the zone, installing telephone lines and running water.
- Collaborating in building houses of worship for different religions.
- Setting up libraries for two neighboring towns.
- Donating land and facilities for schools and sports fields.
- Donating to obtain specialized medical attention in cases requiring treatments not covered by the country's socialized medicine program.

- Giving scholarships for secondary and college studies.
- Developing living quarters for employees.
- Developing entrepreneurial projects with the aim of employing laborers in rural or undeveloped zones.

From 1981 till 2005, he carried out diverse tasks for helping the Sons and Daughters and the Country and Table Delegates in Venezuela, Mexico and Costa Rica. He made the Visits and gave Retreats for the Sons and Daughters of Mexico, Spain, Colombia, Venezuela, and Costa Rica. He was the Delegate of the San Ignacio Community from 2000 till 2003. From 2003 on, he was part of the General Delegation for Cafh's Communities. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Asociación Cafh in Costa Rica, and for the last several years, acted as an advisor both for Asociación Cafh in Costa Rica and for Fundación Cafh in Argentina.

From 1992 through 2005, he was a member of Cafh's Mother Table, fulfilling in turn the roles of Orator, Reader, and lastly, Almoner. As MK Almoner in 2000, with the collaboration of a team of Ordained Sons and Daughters, he carried out a work of systematizing and restructuring the contributions from Cafh's members.

2. THE RULE OF CAFH

Living bodies function under a system that maintains their existence. Members of Cafh, who together compose a living body, are regulated by the Rule of Cafh, which consists of three parts: the Rule, the Method, and the Ceremonial.

The Rule

The section called the Rule is Cafh's guidelines regarding its organization and functioning.

The Rule establishes the functions of the Grand Master or Grand Master Dame, Master Knights and Master Dames, Assistants and Auxiliaries and the functioning of the Full Moon Assembly and the Tables. It also establishes the festivities of Cafh and the attributes, the benefits and obligations of the members of Cafh according to their vows.

The Rule is based on the principle that if we aim to unfold ourselves spiritually we need to adopt norms and methods of work.

The Rule stipulates the norms that the members of Cafh adopt to stimulate our spiritual unfolding. The Rule foresees that these norms be adapted to the times, places and individual characteristics.

The members of Cafh follow the dispositions of the Rule.

To follow the dispositions of the Rule implies responding to some formal obligations such as:

Responding to the commitments that we may have assumed with our vows, among which is found the commitment to attend regularly to reunions and retreats.

Follow acceptable norms of conduct in our mutual relationships, with those who fulfill functions in Cafh and with society.

The Method

The Method is the practical means that Cafh offers us to respond to our spiritual vocation and deals with the varied aspects of our lives such as work, interpersonal relationships, and the responsibility we assume with our families, colleagues, friends and with Cafh. It also offers suggestions to maintain mental and spiritual health in order to fulfill our objective.

The Method of Cafh adapts itself to each one's characteristics and needs and to each one's will to apply it.

The Method is interior and exterior.

The Method is interior since it implies that we work with our mental attitudes, feelings and thoughts through prayer, meditation and a number of ascetic practices.

The Method is exterior since we also work on our daily behavior and on a way to positively unfold our relationships—our relationship with ourselves, with our habits, with those around us and with society in general.

The Method of Cafh is individual.

We do not judge each one's way of living their vocation.

We do not compare members with each other. We consider each member in his or her own context, just as he or she is, wants to live and unfold.

Although all the members of Cafh receive the same instruction in reunions and retreats regarding the exercises of meditation, concentration and others, each one of us applies that instruction according to the counsel we receive in our personal conferences and according to our own characteristics and our will to apply what we learn. We help each other so that we may each discover the best way to unfold ourselves in the most beneficial manner.

Regarding spiritual counsel, each one receives it according to his or her disposition, interest and willingness to give him or herself.

When a member's personal characteristics of circumstances advise it, the Method gives room for them to be dispensed from their regulatory obligations so that they may be able to adapt the method according to what is best for them.

The Ceremonial

The Rule establishes the Ceremonial of Cafh. According to the Rule, the Ceremonial is one of Cafh's gifts and constitutes the visible and invisible Emblem of Cafh's members.

The term ceremonial refers to a formal way of performing acts; that is, according to an established procedure and carried out with attention and care.

The purpose of a ceremonial is to enhance the transcendence of the act being carried out in order to remember its reason and meaning if it is a habitual act, and imprint it in memory if it is a unique or unusual act.

The Ceremonial of Cafh induces us to gain consciousness that we are carrying out an act in the presence of the divine and focuses our attention in the intention that moves us to do it.

The Ceremonial of Cafh points out transcendent moments in our lives; for example, emitting of vows, marriage, death, reciting prayers. It also point out transcendent moments in the groups we integrate; for example, the annual ceremonies and festivities of the Tables.

We find two aspects in Cafh's Ceremonial: ceremonies per se and ceremonial acts.

Ceremonies are those acts in which all the steps are already established, such as the ceremonies of vows, of marriage, of death, and of the consecration of Ordained.

Ceremonial acts are those which accompany other actions, such as prayers when trips begin, prayers recited during retreats, the steps which announce different moments during reunions.

Reciting the prayers established during the Ceremonial of Cafh is also a ceremonial act.

Members of Cafh respect and adapt to the Ceremonial as a way of revering the divine, showing our respect for the human beings we are with and cultivating love for the manifestation of the divine on Earth.

3. USUAL QUESTIONS ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE RULE

As Cafh members, we tend to ask about aspects of the Rule regarding our method of life. We could group the most usual questions into those referring to the means linking us to the Great Current, like the prayers, the Protectors and the blessing, and those referring to offerings, like the contributions, the annual work and the annual mission.

Let's recollect that we call Great Current, *the conjunction of the force of the Masters who project the Mother Idea over humanity, together with the force of intention, thoughts and feelings we human beings generate to achieve our purposes*. This conjunction may be clashing or it may be harmonious.

When the conjunction is clashing because our purposes don't harmonize with the Mother Idea, unfolding, though it indeed does happen, is slow and painful.

When our purposes do harmonize with the Mother Idea, a force is generated which accelerates unfolding. We call *Power of the Great Current* this harmonious force urging us to fulfill our destiny with entirety, in accord with the Mother Idea ruling us in this stage of the Plan of Universal Evolution.

Prayers, invoking the protectors' aid, and the blessing mentioned in the Rule, are ways for us to link ourselves with the Power of the Great Current, and to procure and receive the shelter and help we yearn to have in our lives.

The prayers

Besides the prayers we may say at our discretion, we find in the Rule versicles and prayers which we do say in specific circumstances, such as at the table, as a giving of thanks, in the reunions, the retreats, and others tied in with the ceremonies.

The prayers can be considered from two points of view: that of our relation with the divine and that of the power of the prayers in and of themselves.

Praying is one of the ways we relate with God. It's an intimate intercommunication, without witnesses, between our soul and the divine. We can pray silently or out loud, but our relationship with God remains in the sphere of our interior being.

The prayers are made up of words. The word is vibration, and vibration has power.

Our words have power in accordance with our intention and the feelings moving us to say them, with what we feel when saying them, and with the way in which we say them. The power of a comment said with reluctance is not the same as that of an affirmation said with conviction and energy. For example, the energy moving us to carry something out isn't the same when we say, "Yes...when I can, I'll do it..." as when we affirm, "I will finish it today without fail!"

The prayers established in the Ceremonial are oral, and, depending on the occasion, are done privately or recited as a group. Just like when we speak, the prayers have the power we give them through the intention and feeling we recite them with. We call power of prayer, the force emanating from them and fostering the realization of the intention moving us to say them.

The Ceremonial establishes prayers, which, beyond the power we might give them by the intention and love we say them with, have power in and of themselves. This power stems from three sources:

- From the innumerable times they've been recited, and from the strength of intention and the fervor with which they've been said down through centuries, perhaps even millennia. An example of these prayers are the psalms.
- From the power of the words composing them and the way these are combined. Examples of these prayers are the Om and the verses appearing in the Ceremonial.
- From the manner we vocalize the words of the prayer and the versicle. As those who pronounce mantras well know, sustaining the note and intensity of the voice is just as important as the words making up the prayer or versicle being recited, for obtaining all its power.

The Ceremonial's prayers and versicles are written in the language Cafh received them in from a tradition coming down from ancient times. They may also be recited in vernacular common speech. When said in the original idiom, to the power of meaning, feeling and intention are added the power of the words given voice in their original form and the vibration accumulated down through the millennia of repetitions in that same tongue.

The prayers in the Arypal language have great power; they are a treasure Cafh received by way of the Orders that knew how to preserve it, and which proceeds down from a time so remote it is unknown to us. This treasure is in our custody. We have not found any references to Arypal in current-day ancient language studies.

We read in the course *Ceremonials, Prayers and Hymns*:

“Arypal was considered a sacred tongue. It had forty-nine letters, of which seven were vowels; besides, it had an Unsounded Vowel, which was only pronounced in order to name God.

“From Arypal were born the latter-day languages: Zenzar, completely forgotten nowadays, pure Sanskrit, Pali, Greek and Latin.

“As the centuries went by, Arypal suffered diverse and varied transformations, and was being adapted to the grammatical and phonetic modalities of more modern languages.

What has been conserved, of a truly archaic value, are words that are usually called “potential forms”; these, without being verb, adverb or adjective, serve for these three functions indistinctly, and sometimes even contain an entire phrase.

Ote, for example, can mean “equal,” “comparison,” and even encompass the meaning of the value of the potential cosmic substance.

Ank, symbolizes life, everything emanating from life, the spirit made flesh; and, sometime, means “of” (genitive case).

Abe sometimes means “towards”; and others, “to walk” or “to unite.”

E, at times means “together,” conjointly; other times it's used as a diminutive adverb.

"Ai", "asher", "al", and "cam", are also potential forms.

These sometimes acquire greater force, and other times lose force, if they're followed by the letter "k" or the "e", for example: "otek", "anke", "came".

“Verb conjugations have almost completely been lost; the forms that can be observed in these are similar to those in Greek and Latin.

“There are many synonyms for some ideas, while they run scarce for others; they abound for those referring to nature, to the natural elements; and run short inasmuch as inner feelings or inward impulses are referred to.

“Yet for expressing the idea of God, of the Divine Mother and the superior powers, it has words of marvelous sound; names which are verb and expression at one and the same time.

“While indeed this language is not other than a relic come down to us by way of a few hymns filled with latter-day idioms, affectations and grammatical forms, when vocalized, it does yet generate the vibration proper to the original Arypal.”

The Protectors

Humankind unfolds through the course of history impelled by beings consecrating their lives to opening up paths in all aspects of development, who we call Masters. They broaden our ideas and guide us so that we might achieve possibilities we're unaware of; moreover, they exemplify a dedication, a perseverance and an abnegation that constitute values sustaining and illuminating us. Some of us believe on faith or from our own experience that the Masters, be they living on Earth or existing on other planes, continue their work as our benefactors.

Most of us human beings feel and know that we need that aid; thus we've always trained our inner gaze on those who've helped and pushed human unfolding forward, especially those who've incarnated the spiritual values that sustain our vocation.

When a Table is founded, the Grand Master Knight or Grand Master Dame places it under the patronage of a Master we call the Table's Protector or Protectress. We turn to these Protectors in our prayers so they may guide our steps and assist us in achieving our purposes and realizing our spiritual ideal.

To the noble purpose moving us to invoke the Protectors of the Tables is joined the beneficent energy deriving from their spiritual strength and which reaches us via the Power of the Great Current.

The Blessing

While treating the theme of the prayers, we said the words had power. On the other hand, the combination of certain words has a particular power; when that combination of words becomes set into a formula which is repeated in a certain way so as to attract beneficent forces towards a person, thing or work, we call it *formula of blessing*. For the formula of blessing to be effective, the one imparting it has to accompany it with an intention and a feeling in keeping with the boon one wishes to transmit.

We members of Cafh rely on the Ired blessing. This benediction which the Delegates bestow on their Table members is preceded by an invocation to the Divine Mother and accompanied by the sign of Ank made with the left hand. In this way, divine assistance reaches each single one of us.

The power of the Ired blessing is conveyed only to those Cafh members who, by having pronounced the perpetual vow of complete renunciation to themselves, fulfill the priestly function of consecrating their lives totally to the well-being of souls. The power of this blessing is conveyed exclusively during the Full Moon Assembly to whomever the Grand Master Knight or Dame expressly authorizes. This benediction acts as a channel through which the Power of the Great Current reaches the one who is blessed.

Transmitting the Ired blessing lies within the good judgment and prudence of those who have received that power. In particular, the Delegates ensure that the Great Current blesses all the members of the Table they assist and they impart the Ired blessing to each and every one of them.

Contributions

According to the Rule the members of Cafh have the moral obligation to make contributions in order to maintain the works supported by Cafh. This economic contribution is very important for the growth and expansion of the work of Cafh and for the assistance of the Tables and its members.

Retreat houses, the offices for the institutions supported by Cafh, the expenses to perform Annual Visits and to hold the Full Moon Assembly are, among others, some of the economic obligations that the institutions supported by Cafh face in order to carry out their work.

The Rule establishes that our contributions are a moral obligation because rather than establishing oversight, it appeals to our sense of participation. The Rule does not interfere with the decisions we make and that are dictated by our own conscience.

Civil laws, in general, safeguard that we do not hurt each other and that we respect other people's freedom. They also establish our unavoidable tax obligations so as to be able to administer the government and provide for the common welfare. Nevertheless, contributions for good works are left freely up to the citizens' own level of involvement. Cafh likewise adheres to this principle; that is, collaborating with Cafh's work is a moral obligation, and each Cafh member, according to their own conscience, determines how to fulfill it. Our contributions are a form of expressing the degree of empathy, solidarity and participation we have developed as regards the work of Cafh, not solely in terms of theoretical concepts, but instead in a practical, effective way, for our own benefit and for that of humanity.

Our contributions for maintaining Cafh's activities express the way we undertake those activities as our own. The contribution is one way of recognizing that we have no right to derive our own benefit from what others finance.

Our contributions for the works Cafh sponsors are the way we express our sense of gratitude for what Cafh offers us and our sense of commitment for ensuring that Cafh's teaching reaches more and more souls. By way of our effective contributions, our spiritual participation with society makes itself concrete and evident.

The annual work

Every year we receive the visit of the Grand Master or Grand Master Dame or one of his or her Delegates. On these occasions we present a work that expresses the fruits of our labor during that year and that we offer so that it can benefit other members of Cafh or persons in the society we live. Doing the annual work helps us to remember that the

spiritual work we do individually and with the group transcends the specific interests that we may have and it influences those around us.

The annual work can be done jointly, or it can be comprised of labor performed individually by each group member. The annual works are diverse in nature. For example, they may be written or audiovisual, commenting or elaborating on concepts from the teachings; or they may be artistic or manual through which the group expresses a way of understanding or of feeling. They may also consist of reports on activities that the group as a whole—or its members separately—has undertaken for the benefit of the society in which they live.

Works that may be useful for the Table or for all the members of Cafh are made available to them.

The annual mission

Every year, during the ceremony in which the reunions begin, we receive a mission to be fulfilled throughout the year. The annual mission may involve an individual, the group or it may involve all the members of Cafh.

One of the purposes of the mission is to express our sense of participation with a contribution that benefits society, through either an interior or exterior work.

The annual mission is a work in which we join our intention with our acts towards a good that transcends our own life.

Apparently, the mission consists in doing something that benefits only ourselves. However, since all the members of Cafh are doing it, each one fulfilling the mission that corresponds to them, those individual acts acquire the dimension of the mystical body of Cafh and possess a power that exceeds what each one of us could attain separately.

4. THE DOCTRINE OF CAFH - FUNDAMENTAL POSTULATES AND PRINCIPLES

Postulates

Cafh has the following postulates:

The fundamental principle of the universe—God—transcends our present understanding.

Human beings have countless possibilities in respect to their unfolding. This is because we have *consciousness*—the intelligent perception of ourselves and our sphere of action—and *will*—the capacity to set objectives for ourselves and fulfill them.

The members of Cafh maintain that spiritual unfolding is our fundamental work, and that through our spiritual unfolding, we develop the ability to understand ourselves and to comprehend our relationship with life, the world and the divine.

The members of Cafh uphold that to participate with society is to apply what we learn in a productive way. This is also the way we find peace and happiness for ourselves and help to generate peace and progress for humankind.

Commentary

Cafh offers us a path of spiritual unfolding that is applicable to everyone, in order that we may realize our potential according to our will and characteristics.

Spiritual vocation is what we call our individual will as applied to our spiritual unfolding.

Since we emphasize individual responsibility and our individual capacity to learn, we do not adhere to irreducible dogmas or allow ourselves to be led by charismatic personalities or other things of that nature.

We are careful not to mistake hierarchy of functions with the superiority of some individuals over others. Therefore, as members of Cafh we do not refer to ourselves as Master and disciples. The quest for the divine is individual. Those who embark on that quest are companions on the road.

Fundamental Principles

Human beings have the right to freedom of thought, feelings and to make decisions about our own life without the interference of others.

The right to freedom is basic to human unfolding and gives us countless possibilities. Among these possibilities is that of making commitments to ourselves, to others and to God. Once we make commitments, the exercise of freedom consists in our capacity to fulfill those commitments faithfully.

The right to freedom implies responsibility in exercising it. The development of responsibility as we exercise our freedom is what leads to peace and happiness.

Commentaries

The aim of the teaching of Cafh is to help us expand our consciousness through a continuously updated interpretation of life and the world. The expansion of consciousness, among other values, is what develops our sense of responsibility.

Renouncement is the foundation of the teaching of Cafh and teaches it through the Asceticism of Renouncement and the Mysticism of the Heart.

Acceptance of the limits of our understanding and the will to develop the understanding of ourselves, life, and the world are the firm foundation of our road of unfolding.

With these postulates and fundamental principles, Cafh furthers our spiritual unfolding.

Cafh is offered to all human beings to stimulate their unfolding without discrimination. Its teachings are expressed through institutions sponsored by Cafh, and especially in the way its members apply it to their own lives.

Cafh does not have the final answers or solutions to the problems of the world, but it provides a means to develop humanity more harmoniously and to contribute to the advent of a universal religion in which there is a harmonization of the fundamental principles of the current different beliefs.

5. THE DOCTRINE OF CAFH - CHARACTERISTICS

The doctrine of Cafh is universal, inclusive. It refrains from pointing out who is right or wrong. On the contrary, it reveals the fundamental unity of all the roads that impel human beings to unfold.

The doctrine of Cafh is simple:

- Freedom has two aspects: an inner and an exterior aspect.
- Inner freedom depends on the individual's degree of wisdom and self-control.
No one has the right to limit another human being's inner freedom. Whoever unfolds inner freedom works for peace and happiness in the world.
- Exterior freedom is exercised within the limits established by social responsibility and the sense of participation. In the measure we unfold, our conduct becomes less arbitrary and more responsive to the need for our own unfolding and the unfolding of all human beings. Therefore, it is necessary for each of us to become the master of our own thoughts, feelings, and actions. This mastery is the foundation of self-knowledge and the freedom we can exercise. Cafh stimulates us to respect the concept that our freedom ends where our neighbor's freedom starts.
- Truth neither belongs to a person nor to an institution. We discover truth within and in our experiences in the degree that we progress in our spiritual unfolding.
- Affirmations that are not evident or proven by experience are only possibilities. It is interesting and sometimes stimulating to compare the diverse theories of life and the world. But, definitively, each one has to prove the truth of his/her interpretations with his/her own experience.
- Rather than profess a determined belief, in order to unfold spiritually it is necessary to have a vision of the world and life that can serve as a conceptual basis for concrete work on our conduct.

Cafh offers us a vision of the world based on universal knowledge, centered on common sense and the effective participation in human unfolding as the foundation for our spiritual work. Therefore, it challenges us to answer for ourselves the fundamental questions through a conscious work to know ourselves, discover our possibilities and fulfill those possibilities that promote the expansion of our consciousness and benefit humanity.

Cafh states that doctrines are interpretations of reality, and therefore, there is not any human group that can have the true and final doctrine.

Cafh considers that to try to impose a belief or a way of thinking is a clear form of manipulation. Cafh sees society as a community of individual human beings. It shows its respect for society in its respect for each human being. Therefore, even though Cafh offers and shows a conception of the world and life, it neither imposes it on those who think differently nor on the members of Cafh, nor on others.

Cafh proposes a universal thinking; free of sectarianisms and antagonisms, updated through the individual's unfolding.

Cafh collaborates in the advent of a universal religion that reconciles the fundamental ideas of different beliefs in order to coincide with the Mother Idea and gives freedom to all the ways that individuals relate with the Divine.

Cafh exhorts each individual to recognize and fulfill his/her responsibility. In this way, it stimulates personal unfolding and the advancement of humanity.

Peace and happiness are not found outside oneself—governments, institutions, ideologies, beliefs—but within the being, from his/her readiness to understand himself/herself and the willingness to love and unfold. In the measure that the human being advances in his/her unfolding, he/she finds peace within and generates peace in the world.

When each human being has peace in his/her heart, there will be peace and happiness in the world.

The Doctrine of Cafh is expressed in its Teaching.

6. THE DOCTRINE OF CAFH – THE TEACHING

Characteristics of the Teaching of Cafh

Cafh expounds its vision of the world and life in the teaching. This is made up of:

The teaching of Cafh: Concepts of Cafh that express its vision of the world and life.

The universal teaching: Points of view shared by diverse religions, philosophies, and spiritual doctrines.

In addition, those who transmit the teachings contribute the understandings they acquire through personal experience.

The object of the teaching of Cafh is the individual's unfolding without imposing a system of ideas or a dogma as an object of faith.

The orators take special care that the concepts they explain are not fixed in dogmas. This is the reason why the teachings are renewed according to the advancement of human knowledge. The teaching notes are conceptual supports, referring to a moment and a circumstance. They are points of departure to advance from in the discovery of the unfathomable mystery of the reality of life and the reason of our existence.

The Teaching of Cafh shows a vision of life and the world without demanding to believe in them. Each one must verify it through his/her unfolding and individual experience.

The Teaching of Cafh respects different theories about the world and life, but accepts as truth only what is evident and verifiable by experience.

The Teaching of Cafh not only promotes the study of its point of view, but also the point of view of other ideas, so that everyone may develop his/her own discernment and reach a universal vision of him/herself and of the world.

The Teaching of Cafh asserts that the great religions contain the essence of the fundamental truths; that the knowledge of their different conceptions allows us to understand them in their contexts and within the greater whole of ideas about life and the world.

The Teaching of Cafh suggests that the vision of the world and life is broadened, expanding consciousness through inner unfolding and the understanding of different points of view.

The Teaching of Cafh states that a universal religion can orient humanity towards the definite solution of struggles among human beings and the economic and social problems that afflict them.

Meaning of Terms that appear in the Teaching of Cafh

God

In the Teaching of Cafh, the term "God" denotes the basic principle of the universe, the Eternal Spirit that brings manifestation to life.

The members of Cafh tend to revere God as the origin of the universe in the feminine image of the Divine Mother.

In Cafh, the Divine Mother, as an expression of the work, love, and omnipotence of God, is the main point of attention and veneration.

The Teaching of Cafh recognizes a potential and an active state of the Divine Mother.

The potential state is called Hes—that which is not yet.

The active state is called Ahehia—that which is.

The Divine Incarnation

The Divine Incarnation periodically descends to the Earth to permeate everything with its presence, illumine our minds and predispose us to divine union. The Divine Incarnation who lives among us as a human being and participates in all the vicissitudes of our lives, we call *The Strong Liberator*.

What is done by the Divine Incarnation—give a cosmic dimension to the human consciousness—encompasses the whole consciousness of humanity, but each one of us has to repeat it in ourselves using our will power and effort.

The act in which the divine takes a human body we call the Divine Incarnation.

The divine act that opens human beings completely to the possibility of attaining union with God we call redemption.

The identification of our consciousness with the cosmic consciousness we call union with God, or Divine Union.

Soul

The word soul has different meanings.

In this course, the most current meaning is used and it means: human being or person.

In religious thought, soul means the immortal part of an individual.

Also, the person's soul is a compound of human attributes which are expressed as consciousness, thought, feeling, and will.

In the course *The Becoming* we read:

“The soul is the human being's mind; it is real by the manifestations that determine it, although it is invisible in its species” and that is formed by the instinctive mind, understanding mind and intuitive mind.

“...The instinctive mind is the soul's storehouse. All past experiences are registered there; from there also spring the impulses that express themselves in the being.”

“...The understanding mind is the part of the soul that analyzes ideas and controls feelings; it observes expounded material, considers the results and does not allow instinct to prevail over understanding.”

“...The present-day human being is developing that part of the soul. Although s/he is still unable to master all the manifestations of the instinct, s/he is no longer purely instinctual.”

“...The intuitive mind, which future human beings will develop, is the potential of the soul who knows things in themselves and expresses them without variations.”

The Universal Plan of Evolution

The Teaching of Cafh considers that manifestation has a purpose and that life follows a progressive trajectory toward that end.

The Teaching of Cafh calls the divine plan that directs life to fulfill this end the Universal Plan of Evolution.

The Mother Idea

The Teaching of Cafh considers that the Universal Plan of Evolution unfolds in steps, and the end that all human beings have to realize in each of these steps is called the Mother Idea.

The Teaching of Cafh considers that the Mother Idea in our present period of unfolding impels us to harmonize the values that move us to advance personally with universal values that are expressed in attitudes and actions that direct us toward our final end, Divine Union.

The Teaching of Cafh considers that in the measure that the soul realizes egoence, the Mother Idea is expressed in his/her daily life.

The Great Work

The Teaching of Cafh calls the totality of material, intellectual and spiritual works that human beings carry out to fulfill our destiny in accordance with the Universal Plan of Evolution: the Great Work.

As we do not have a complete and current consciousness of the final end of our works, not all our acts foster the realization of the Universal Plan of Evolution. Those which coincide with our final end accelerate our unfolding and bring us plenitude; those which don't, delay our evolution and cause us suffering. But together they all move us to fulfill the purpose of our lives.

The Teaching of Cafh calls the totality of the material, intellectual, and spiritual works that we carry out in harmony with the Universal Plan of Evolution: the Integrity of the Great Work.

The Great Current

The Teaching of Cafh calls the union of the force of the Masters² that projects the Mother Idea on humanity with the force of intention, thoughts and feelings that we generate in order to carry out our own purposes: the Great Current. When our purposes harmonize with the Mother Idea, it generates a force that accelerates our unfolding. Therefore, the harmonious union of these forces is beneficial and constructive for us, our surroundings and humanity.

This powerful force that impels us to completely fulfill our own destiny with plenitude, in accordance with the Mother Idea that directs each step of the Universal Plan of Evolution, we call the Power of the Great Current.

² See: The Mother Idea

Grace

The teaching of Cafh calls the divine orientation, assistance and protection we receive from the Masters³, guiding us according to the Universal Plan of Evolution, grace. When through our acts and intentions we resonate with the Great Current, Divine Grace is actualized in us and protects our unfolding.

The Becoming

The Universal Plan of Evolution is carried out on account of the process of change which we call Becoming. It is obvious that for evolution to occur there must be change.

From a broader point of view, becoming is the succession of changes we observe in the cosmos. From a narrower point of view, becoming is the succession of changes we experience throughout the process of expansion of our consciousness.

From an individual point of view, becoming is as much being as it is the process of being. Better said, becoming is to be in process. Becoming is the permanent change of the present which becomes the past and of a future that becomes the present.

The Becoming and the Law of Renouncement

We call becoming acting in life as we perceive it and interpret it: *renouncement*. According to the level of our unfolding and the situation in which we find ourselves, we interpret the effects of becoming in our lives and also what it means to renounce. For example, the changes we experience when we are growing up, we see as positive. In adolescence we do not say, "I lost my childhood," but we say, "I am an adolescent! I want to be free!" But when we enter middle age, we start to interpret changes as losses, because in our eyes those changes are signs that we are closer to death. In general, for most of us, renouncement is becoming in its negative way. In its positive way, we call becoming normal life, luck, the right to be happy, or something else agreeable. Nonetheless, changes are the essence of our possibility to unfold, whether they are positive changes or the ones we see as negative or depriving. Therefore, renouncement—becoming expressed in the human being's life—is a synonym for our possibility to unfold.

Life presents itself as a continuous present. We cannot repeat something that has occurred or anticipate what has not happened. Consequently, we cannot hold on to anything, not even temporarily, since the present is like a drop of mercury that is always there but cannot be grasped. .

Therefore, the continuous changes of becoming imply that to live is to renounce continuously. Based on this reality, we say that renouncement is a law. To understand that renouncement is a law liberates us from the illusion of believing that to detach or not from the things we hoard depends on us. In reality, it is life itself that, second by second, leads us to free ourselves from what we hoard.

We live renouncement as an ascetic-mystical practice through three attitudes before life: presence, participation, and reversibility.

³ See: The Mother Idea

Presence

Presence means to remain in the present. We close the door to escaping from the moment. If we remember, it is to understand what we are living; if we anticipate, it is to discern what do we have to do now.

In a bigger context, to remain present is to be conscious of the great context of life. In relation to the notion of being, it is to remain conscious of the divine in ourselves and of ourselves in the world and life. In the context of humanity, it is to remain present in society, stimulating its advancement and producing in ourselves the same changes we want to produce in others and in the world. This takes us to:

Participation

Within the universal context, expanding the vision of ourselves and the world we live in.

Within the human context—all human beings—by the practice of providential economy, with the appropriate development of an open and supportive attitude, open to the messages of our surroundings and life. This implies:

Reversibility

In harmony of the opposites, it is to know how to be fully here and now without losing the consciousness of the eternal present. The particular and the general, the individual and the whole, I and humanity, are two faces of the same reality. To attain reversibility is to affirm our consciousness in reality, acknowledging the validity of all its expressions.

It is to place our personal problems in the context of others' problems and general problems. This leads us to understand the illusion of looking for an individual happiness separated from the environment in which we live.

The present is, in part, the consequence of the interaction between current possibilities with the consequence of past events; not only the ones we have lived, but those beyond our personal world. This interaction is governed by three laws: the Law of Consecutive Predestination, the Arbitral Law of Possibilities, and the Flame.

The Law of Consecutive Predestination

The Law of Consecutive Predestination determines the situation in which we find ourselves at each moment of our lives. Our present is the result of the synergy produced by our past actions. At the same time, our actions occur in the context created by the actions of other human beings performed over time. The synergy of our actions is intimately bound to the synergistic actions of all humanity.

Even though the context in which we live is created by the multiple actions of humanity, each of us is a participant and influential factor in the way in which changes occur and in their consequences on human unfolding.

In our individual context, each one of our actions, and also our mental and emotional states, and including our intentions, determines the consequences that affect us, those around us and humanity in general, instant after instant.

Every action has an effect. The chain of effects produces consequences that, many times, appear disconnected from any specific action. It is difficult to relate cause and

effect because of the synergistic effect of many causes and effects acting simultaneously over time. That is why when we consider the consequences of our actions we have to take into account much more than the immediate effects we perceive. The succession of effects produced by each action is lost in the immediacy of our perception, but acts unfailingly in our destiny as well as in the destiny of humanity. Making an analogy, the consequences of the wake that a ship leaves behind when we are traveling up a river goes beyond the visual effect that we like to contemplate from the stern. The current that our ship makes, for example, influences which fish eats and which one is eaten. When the waves erode the banks, they determine which trees fall, which houses are destroyed. Even more, they directly affect the people who live in those houses and also many others who relate to them.

Many of our decisions affect us and others in a more transcendent way than we can associate with the importance we give to what we are doing. We can imagine how much more we are affected by the consequences of the decisions we make about how to orient our lives.

The Arbitral Law of Possibilities

The Arbitral Law of Possibilities establishes the frame of reference in which we exercise our free will.

Even though we are subject to the Law of Consecutive Predestination, we can decide how to respond to different situations and in this way accelerate or delay our unfolding and the unfolding of humanity. This means that in the context of the Mother Idea, the way we respond to the effects of the Law of Consecutive Predestination is in our hands, and the speed with which we realize the ultimate end affects not only our own destiny, but also that of humanity as a whole.

The Law of Consecutive Predestination and the Arbitral Law of Possibilities operate simultaneously and in a harmonious way. The Law of Consecutive Predestination puts the wave of causes and effects of our actions in context with the frame of reference of the Mother Idea. The Arbitral Law of Possibilities gives us the opportunity to correct the direction that our life is taking, for good or bad. If our actions guide us to the realization of the Mother Idea, we generate progress and plenitude; if not, we cause suffering, not only for ourselves but also for humanity.

The Flame

We call the awakening of consciousness we experience in the moment we discover the connection between our free will and the possibility of realizing the Mother Idea that rules our life: *The Flame*. We experience this discovery as a yearning to advance and to dedicate our life to produce our unfolding. In other words, the Flame is the moment in which our vocation of unfolding awakens.

We say that the Flame is a law because the yearning for unfolding is a fact that is presented once in a human being's life. After that moment, we can confirm or refuse to acknowledge this inner call. The rhythm of our unfolding, as well as the sorrow and plenitude that we will find, and also the contributions we make to the progress of humanity, depend on the way we respond to it.

Providential Economy

Providential economy, according to the teaching of Cafh, is the wise use of the available resources with the objective of fulfilling the ultimate purpose of life, according to the Mother Idea, and consequently with Universal Plan of Evolution.

Therefore we call the wise administration of resources needed for human unfolding and the evolution of life upon the Earth: providential economy. We say *economy* because it is about the production, conservation and multiplication of necessary and useful resources for unfolding. We say *providential* in the sense that it provides what we and others require to reach a desired goal, in this case, the fulfillment of the highest possibilities upon this earth.

The Body of Fire

The Ired is the Divine Mother's Message transmitted through Foa, the Force of Love, and is manifested in the Power of the Great Current. As members of Cafh we transmute our physical body, giving it more subtle characteristics and forming the Body of Fire by lending our body as a point of discharge of Foa upon the earth and by our voluntary and continuous offering. This body covers us like a veil, a light that envelopes our physical body.

The transmutation of the physical body and the formation of the Body of Fire take place by stages, but the birth of the Body of Fire occurs in the moment we enter Cafh. The depth of our understanding of that moment, as well as the transcendence that belonging to Cafh has for our lives, greatly determines our participation in the Work of Cafh. The successive offerings, the Vows, the responsibilities and duties will be confirmations of the orientation we have already given to our lives.

The similarity of the Bodies of Fire among the members of Cafh is produced by the inner and joint effort to realize our spiritual vocation. That similarity increases to the extent that we unfold, and it is more noticeable than the similarity due to genetic factors.

The Bodies of Fire form a mystical chain that unites us indissolubly by a bond of fraternity, giving life to the mystical body of Cafh.

The Heavenly Stars

The Heavenly Stars are the seven mystical names with which Cafh identifies the different aspects of the spiritual unfolding in souls.

HES is the first star. It symbolizes the Mother Idea, that which establishes the line of our unfolding according to Universal Plan of Evolution until we reach the state of egoence.

IREN is the second star. It symbolizes the Divine Voice. The Masters give life to the Mother Idea, transforming it into Ired, the Divine Voice. It is the star which guides us throughout our unfolding.

FOA is the third star. It symbolizes the Power of Love through which the Divine Voice reaches and stays in our soul.

The fourth star is IHS. It symbolizes the union of our human nature with the Divine Voice.

The fifth star is CAFH. It symbolizes the mystical body. The members of Cafh form a reunion of souls whose objective is to live in harmony with the Mother Idea.

The sixth star is AEIA. It symbolizes the spiritual illumination that we reach when our state of participation includes all souls and we recognize the divine presence in them.

The seventh star is SUBSTANTIAL UNION. It symbolizes the soul's union with the Divine Mother. Our liberated soul knows who s/he is; he/she will not go back to being a composite or being subject to the combinations of life and death. We say that the soul has her/his PROPER NAME because, according to the teaching of Cafh, when the soul is in union with the divine s/he reaches her/his true, unrepeatable individuality or egoence. The state of egoence is the actualization of the Mother Idea expressed in the soul.

The 10 basic words for spiritual unfolding

The annual Messages from 1995 to 2000 present the process of unfolding from the point of view of the following words:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Silencing | 6. Wanting |
| 2. Listening | 7. Daring |
| 3. Remembering | 8. Judging |
| 4. Understanding | 9. Forgetting |
| 5. Knowing | 10. Transmuting |

Those Messages describe how these words, besides indicating the proper actions of asceticism, also give shape to a mysticism that acts upon our notion of being.

The spiritual names

When entering a group, the members of Cafh receive a spiritual name. Perhaps the most evident benefit of receiving this name is that it helps us remember that we are united to the group by our spiritual vocation. These names are preceded by a vowel except in the group of Knights.

The spiritual names correspond to the names that ancient cultures gave to the sun as the source of life on Earth. In the symbology of Cafh, the sun represents the mind.

1. LEUS (*Greek mythology*). (*Secretary*)
2. ELIHO (*Greek mythology*). (*Almoner*)
3. SOLEM (*Roman mythology*). (*Reader*)
4. RAS (*Syrian mythology*). (*Archivist*)
5. SHEMESH (*Jewish and Acadian mythology*). (*Orator*)
6. ORMUZ (*Persian mythology*). (*Assistant*)
7. ARKA (*Hindu mythology*). (*Gate keeper*)

The vowel that precedes these names corresponds to the group we belong to within a Table.

The Dames' names have as a precedent letter I: ILEUS, IELIHO...

The Squires' names have as a precedent letter A: ALEUS, AELIHO...

The Damsels' names have as a precedent letter E: ELEUS, EELIHO...

The Pages' names have as a precedent letter O: OLEUS, OELIHO...

The Maidens' names have as a precedent letter U: ULEUS, UELIHO...

Spiritual counsel

The objective of the spiritual counsel for those who receive it is to deepen the capacity to discern how to orient his/her life in a positive way and to acquire enough inner strength to live according to that discernment.

Characteristics of spiritual counsel

Religious or spiritual beliefs, political inclinations or affiliations, social or economic situations are not subjects for spiritual counsel for the one who receives it or the one giving it.

Spiritual counsel responds to the characteristics, needs and situation of the one asking for the counsel and to the vocation and his/her commitment to fulfill it.

Spiritual counsel does not imply imposing a conduct, belief or an authority. Whoever receives it decides what to do with the counsel.

Difference between psychological orientation and spiritual counsel

The objective of the psychological orientation is to help the person who asks for it attain and keep behaviors that are conducive to a serene and productive life in society.

Spiritual counsel orients the person who asks for it toward the fulfillment of the spiritual vocation.

Spiritual counsel relies on specialized psychological assistance when this is needed by the one receiving the counsel. Even more, the spiritual counselor needs to have a good background of psychological knowledge in order to understand and assist whoever asks for counsel. But even with this knowledge, the spiritual counselor does not provide psychological assistance to the one needing more specific help in this respect.

BASIC CONCEPTS

1. THE CATEGORIES

Human beings unfold through the experiences of daily life, study, and interpersonal relationships. Those of us who have realized our spiritual vocation primarily apply it in our own daily life as a deliberate work on the unfolding of our state of consciousness.

The work we, as members of Cafh, commit to carry out in a deliberate way to unfold our state of consciousness is guided and organized by categories and groups. The categories, as well as the groups, express the commitments that we make to our individual unfolding and the work of Cafh. We express this commitment through the emission of Vows. These vows, in turn, give us the force and the decision to live according to our vocation of spiritual unfolding.

The vows are silence, fidelity, obedience and renouncement, and we can emit them in a temporary, solemn or perpetual way. The Eternal Vow, which is considered below, is emitted under particular circumstances.

When we enter Cafh we emit the first vow, the Temporary Vow of Silence.

The group and category that we belong to do not reflect our inner qualities, but our level of commitment. Our interior qualities are expressed through our actions. Our commitments are made public through the vows that we emit.

The groups are organized into Tables. The Tables are grouped by category.

The categories of Tables are Sponsored, Solitary, and Ordained.

The Table in which the Grand Master Knight/Dame has his/her seat belongs to the category of the Ordained and is called the Mother Table of Cafh. Its members assist the Grand Master Knight/Dame in the direction of the Tables and act as a body of advisors.

The Tables are organized into six groups. The groups and its members are identified by the nomenclature of the Order of Knights to which Cafh has historical and conceptual ties: groups of Knights, Dames, Squires, Damsels, Pages and Maidens. This nomenclature is secondary, not essential, in character and serves to distinguish the corresponding vows of each group and category.

In each group we, as members of Cafh, receive the best means for our unfolding through the teachings and training in ascetic and mystical practices.

The Rule establishes general guidelines for the maximum time that the members of Cafh remain in the different groups and categories. However, these are recommendations and can be adapted with the proper support to the needs and willingness of each one of us to commit ourselves.

The groups generally are divided into groups of men and women.

The Sponsored Tables are made up of members who have emitted the Vows of Silence or of Silence and Fidelity in a temporary or perpetual way.

The Solitary Tables add the Solemn Vows of Silence and Fidelity for the Damsels and Squires and the Perpetual Vows of Silence, Fidelity, and Obedience to the Grand Master Knight/Dame for the Dames and Knights.

The Ordained Tables add the temporary and solemn Vows of Silence, Fidelity and Obedience, and the Vow of Renunciation in a solemn or perpetual way.

The Ordained Tables can be made up of members who live in their private residences or members who live in community.

The Tables of Ordained whose members live in their private residences are only made up of groups of Knights and Dames. The Tables of Ordained whose members live in community can also have groups of Pages, Maidens, Squires and Damsels. The members of the community have a celibate life and the groups of men and women live separately.

The Mother Table of Cafh is made up of the Grand Master Knight/Dame and seven Master Knights and seven Master Dames.

The Vows of Silence and Fidelity in the different categories reflect the commitments of the soul to him/herself to work deliberately on his/her unfolding. The Vow of Obedience and the Vow of Renunciation reflect the soul's commitment to the work of Cafh, as much as it refers to the point of wanting to offer his/her free will, and as long as it unites with forces and objectives to expand the teaching and work of Cafh. The Vow of Obedience is essentially of union with the Grand Master Knight/Dame of Cafh. The Vow of Renunciation expresses the soul's willingness to put his/her life at the feet of the Divine Mother in order to unite with the Grand Master Knight/Dame for the expansion of the work of Cafh.

The Eternal Vow of Union is emitted when an Ordained Knight or Dame is elected by a complete Table of 42 members or when the Grand Master Knight/Dame invites any Ordained Knights and Dames to enter the Mother Table of Cafh. There are other extraordinary situations in which some Ordained Knights and Dames emit an Eternal Vow of Union. The members of Cafh who emit the Eternal Vow of Union are identified as Master Knights and Master Dames.

Therefore, the different categories and groups indicate the degree of our commitment to our individual unfolding as well as the degree of our commitment to the expansion of the work of Cafh.

In all the categories we find the means to stimulate unfolding and predispose us to Divine Union. Moreover, our concrete and effective offering and our public commitment to carry out the Work of Cafh is, in itself, a very effective means to promote our unfolding. When one works for a noble cause and the good of humanity, one receives that good also.

Each one of us freely and individually determines the degree of commitment and the way of life we want to live. This commitment determines the category and group that Cafh offers us to promote our spiritual unfolding.

The members of Cafh who emit the Vows of Silence and Fidelity make the effort mainly to acquire the habits and disciplines that prepare them physically, mentally and spiritually to expand their state of consciousness.

The members of Cafh who emit the Vow of Obedience to the Grand Master Knight/Dame add to this effort for expansion of the state of consciousness by putting themselves in a position to assist in guiding the groups and the Tables and to express the teaching of Cafh.

The members of Cafh who also emit the Vow of Renunciation in a perpetual way work as apostles of love and participation in the Work of Cafh, in the way in which the Grand Master Knight/Dame requires.

The members of Cafh who emit the Eternal Vow of Union have an immense responsibility to be always at the disposition of the Grand Master Knight/Dame in order to serve souls and the Work of Cafh.

Independently of the Vows that we have emitted, our basic work is to promote our spiritual unfolding. Everything else we can do flourishes from our increasing capacity to love, to participate, to understand and to empathize as a sure pledge of our spiritual unfolding

2. THE MOTHER IDEA

The Teaching of Cafh calls the divine plan that rules life in the fulfillment of its purpose the *Plan of Universal Evolution*. The Plan of Universal Evolution develops by stages; the *Mother Idea* is the particular purpose that human beings have to fulfill at each one of these stages. The Mother Idea is, therefore, characteristic of each cycle of unfolding and establishes the wealth of possibilities that all human beings have in each cycle.

Making an analogy to help us understand these great cosmological and ontological concepts, we could say that just as a country has a development plan for the economic, social, and political spheres that leads its citizens to develop common objectives, human unfolding, in its totality, has a driving force that we call the Mother Idea.

All human beings, consciously or unconsciously, in a positive or negative way, participate in the realization of the Mother Idea. Although it is true that we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes, divine grace assists us with the intervention of great beings who give impetus to the realization of the Mother Idea and accelerate the processes of unfolding.

The Plan of Universal Evolution is propelled by beings we call Initiates. They all intervene in the assistance, progress, and evolution of humanity. According to their work, they are grouped into three categories:

The first category is Solar Initiates.

The second category is Lunar Initiates.

The third category is Initiates of Fire.

The Solar Initiates intervene in the fundamental destinies of each cycle of human unfolding. They project the Mother Idea among human beings with such strength that human beings follow it from the beginning to the end. The planet Earth and all human beings are infused with the grace and protection of Solar Initiates. Examples of Solar Initiates are Manu Vaivasvata, Abraham, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed.

The Lunar Initiates assist in the unfolding of different sectors of humanity. They are the guides of religions, philosophies, nations, and organizations. They give form to the Mother Idea that the Solar Initiates project. Examples of Lunar Initiates are Moses, Plato, Mary (mother of Jesus), Francis of Assisi, and Mahatma Gandhi.

The Initiates of Fire intervene to assist individual human beings. They stimulate their spiritual advancement and prepare them to fulfill the work they will do in the world. Although the Initiates of Fire do not always stand out publicly and their work goes by unnoticed, they are the Initiates who are closest to human beings. They guide souls toward their inner unfolding; they motivate them to make an effort to perceive their vocation and fulfill their destiny. Their work is more individual than collective. The Initiates of Fire can be found, for example, among mystics, artists, saints, explorers, and scientists.

As members of Cafh, we are assisted by the three categories of Initiates, whom we call *Masters*.

The majority of Masters who assist Cafh belong to the category of Initiates of Fire. They assist us in fulfilling our mysticism of participation with all human beings and union with the divine.

At this stage of human unfolding, the Mother Idea prompts us to develop our own means—our willpower, reason, individual and collective experience—to become conscious of the universal as well as of the personal realms, of cosmic reality as well as of daily reality, of love for all beings as well as of love for ourselves. We do all of this without leaving aside any aspect of life, and with our ultimate aim of divine union always in mind. In other words, the Mother Idea prompts us to harmonize the values that promote our own personal progress with universal values, expressed in attitudes and actions that will take us toward union with the divine, our ultimate objective.

Some of the values that promote personal progress are will, responsibility, intelligence, and work. Empathy, love, and consciousness are some of the values that move us toward divine union.

Harmonizing these two categories of values develops our creative capacity, the ability to engage in unselfish actions, and self-mastery. These take precedence over the desire to possess, to get advantages for oneself, and to exercise control over others. This attitude before life is the foundation of a united effort to expand consciousness.

Why do we call personal development a means, not an end?

We say this because, while being able to exercise individual willpower is a great personal and collective achievement, that is not enough to know who we are, where we are going, and what happens after death. Neither does it tell us what our final objectives are. How can we direct our will if we don't know what our ultimate destiny is?

We say this because, while reason does develop our capacity to discover and gradually understand the world we live in, and while it does stimulate introspection, self-analysis, experience, and reflection, it does not give satisfactory answers to existential questions. We say this because, although we follow the steps of our personal experience as well as those of humanity as a whole in order to expand our feelings and achieve broader points of view, in our present human condition we are always prone to generate suffering and to forget that we are part of a much greater reality and that our destiny is to unite with all human beings and the divine.

We say this because the specter of blind individualism, the suffering that comes with selfishness and the meaninglessness of a life without universal horizons can be hidden behind the strongest will, the sharpest intellect, and the most varied and interesting experience.

Our own means are not enough to keep us alert to our situation in life. By themselves, they are far from being able to grant us deep and permanent consciousness of belonging to the cosmos, of our destiny of union with the divine.

What else can we count on? What is the point where our limited and personalistic state of consciousness connects with our perception of our destiny? That point is faith in our destiny of divine union, the foundation and support of our spiritual vocation. Our spiritual vocation, that inner strength that motivates us to unfold, is what keeps us conscious and prompts us to realize the Mother Idea. It shows in our effort to overcome the limitations of our present-day condition.

Our spiritual vocation helps us to not circumscribe ourselves within a personalistic vision and moves us, again and again, to remember that we are small and that we belong to the cosmos. This is why we call it a vocation of renouncement. This vocation allows us, in spite of our personal limitations, to find the way to divine union.

Cafh participates in the fulfillment of the Mother Idea by contributing the Mysticism of the Heart so that human beings will be able to achieve a state of egoence. The state of egoence will come when the Mother Idea is realized in the life of each soul.

The word “egoent” has two parts: “ego,” from the Latin “ego,” meaning “I” and “ent” from the Latin suffix “ent,” referring to “existence.” We could say that the egoent human being combines his or her unique, unrepeatable individuality with his or her destiny of union with the divine. Egoence is the result of the harmonization of the values that promote personal progress with the values that promote attitudes and actions leading to divine union.

The Mysticism of the Heart is an attitude, a point of view, a feeling, a thought, centered on the destiny of union with the divine and manifested in consistent action.

This is why we say that the mysticism of the heart cultivates our awareness of our union with all souls and centers our emotional movements and thoughts on the common good, far removed from selfishness and meanness of spirit. The resulting inner quietude, in its turn, deepens our awareness of union even more.

The mission of Cafh is fundamentally mystical and teaches us to:

- Make the effort to keep uppermost in mind our destiny of union with the divine
- Make the effort to keep uppermost in mind our intention of loving all souls
- Work to develop the attitude that places our own problems within the context of others’ problems and the world’s problems. What do my suffering, my need, my desires mean within the reality of humankind’s experiences?
- Work on consistency between what we believe and think and the life we lead
- Work on concretizing in our life what we would like to see fulfilled around us. The effort to try to change others, society, and the world will be fruitless if we don’t first work to produce that change in ourselves. If we wish to live in an orderly society, we need to put our lives in order. If we wish to be respected, we need to give respect. If we wish to be considered good persons, we need to adopt and follow behavior that is upright and respectful of the freedom of others.
- Work on concretizing in the world, through the authentic expression of our whole being and of our degree of egoence, the mystical and transcendent work of Cafh.

This teaching gives Cafh and its members the possibility of responding to the rise of a future universal religion.

Since we have not arrived there yet, we can’t define what we mean by universal religion. Our conception of universal religion is rather an ideal, a projection based on our best desires. However, there are attitudes, points of view, and actions that we intuit can lead us to create the universal religion that will unite us with all human beings in

the fulfillment of the Mother Idea. In terms of attitudes: openness to diversity, to the universal, to learning, and to listening. In terms of points of view: equanimity and objectivity in analyzing social and personal information. In terms of actions: in general, carrying out in our own life the way of life we think that society and each individual should adopt to attain peace and wellbeing.

We can make big changes with very small changes. With a limited number of people who significantly broaden their state of consciousness, countless human beings will understand and live broader lives with greater awareness. Great transformations are the result of individuals' determination, change, and expanded consciousness. This opens us up to an immense range of possibilities and, at the same time, a great responsibility. If not I, who? If not now, when? If I don't know how, who do I think knows? If I think that no one knows more than I do, what do I expect others to do?

The Mother Idea speaks directly to each of us, and it is the responsibility of each of us to respond to the vocation that we feel impelled to fulfill. The Solar, Lunar, and Initiates of Fire can guide us, help us, and illumine us, but only we can do the unique, unrepeatable work that is up to each of us to carry out.

3. THE GREAT WORK

In the previous teaching, we defined terms such as Plan of Universal Evolution and Mother Idea. We will repeat those concepts here.

The Teaching of Cafh calls the divine plan that rules life in the fulfillment of its purpose the *Plan of Universal Evolution*. The Plan of Universal Evolution develops by stages; the *Mother Idea* is the particular purpose that human beings have to fulfill at each one of these stages. The Mother Idea is, therefore, characteristic of each cycle of unfolding and establishes the wealth of possibilities that all human beings have in each cycle.

All human beings, consciously or unconsciously, in a positive or negative way, participate in the realization of the Mother Idea. Although it is true that we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes, divine grace assists us with the intervention of great beings who give impetus to the realization of the Mother Idea and accelerate the processes of unfolding.

The Plan of Universal Evolution is propelled by beings we call Initiates. They all intervene in the assistance, progress, and evolution of humanity.

Nevertheless, we human beings share the effort to concretize the Mother Idea on Earth.

In this teaching, we develop the concepts related to how human beings and particularly how we, the members of Cafh, concretize the Mother Idea in the world.

The Great Work and the Integrity of the Great Work

The Plan of Universal Evolution unfolds on Earth through the Mother Idea, which in turn unfolds through the divine ideas of the Initiates and through the material, intellectual, and spiritual works of human beings.

The material, intellectual, and spiritual human works are what make up the *Great Work*.

The divine ideas humanly concretized in the world are what make up the *Integrity of the Great Work*.

When human works do not fit in with the Mother Idea, human unfolding—although it does take place—does so very slowly and with great suffering. But when human works are channeled in a harmonious plan and are aligned with the Mother Idea, they become good and progressive works. In those cases, the fulfillment of the Mother Idea is a source of happiness. The Law of Consecutive Predestination and the Arbitral Law of Possibilities become attuned to each other and human beings' lives result in peace and happiness.

Each group of human beings works on an aspect of the Great Work, thus collaborating in the fulfillment of the Mother Idea. It is as though different parts of the Great Work were being worked on and brought together in time and space.

The Great Work is fulfilled through the *organization, knowledge, and experience of the divine*.

Organization implies that the people who gather to fulfill one aspect of the Great Work need to coordinate their means and their efforts to achieve in the best way the specific aim they have set for themselves.

Knowledge refers to the wealth of wisdom that we human beings acquire through the exercise of our intellectual faculties and the development of our affective-cognitive processes. Through these we understand nature and the qualities and relationships of things, and are thus able to collaborate positively in the Great Work.

Experience of the divine refers to the wisdom we acquire with the mystical practice, which connects us to God and which promotes the fulfillment of human beings' destiny of divine union and of the Great Work upon Earth.

The Work of Cafh

Within this work of organization, knowledge and experience of the divine, the work of Cafh develops the Mysticism of the Heart. To this end, it gathers souls destined for that, and gives us the assistance and means to gradually unfold the mission it is ours to fulfill.

The souls destined for Cafh unfold the Mysticism of the Heart through the practice of the Asceticism of Renouncement in accordance with the level of their commitment to unfold and the extent of their willingness to participate in the work of Cafh.

Basic points explaining how we carry out the work of Cafh:

- The reunion of souls of Cafh forms the Mystical Body of Cafh. It is made up of both people living on Earth and souls dwelling in the astral world.
- The work of Cafh is carried out and manifested in the world through its Mystical Body, that is, through all the resources we have at our disposal as human beings: our bodies, our souls, our possibilities, our capabilities, our material goods, our generosity, our capacity for empathy, and so forth.
- The work of Cafh, which is the development of the Mysticism of the Heart, is made up of the inner work (expansion of consciousness) and the exterior work (actions directed toward the common good) that we as members of Cafh carry out in ourselves and in society at large.
- The creative force that leads to souls' progress and the fulfillment of the work of Cafh derives from the goods that are intrinsic to the human being. Although material goods are a secondary means to fulfill the work of Cafh, when they are the consequence of that creative force, they support and protect good works for society.
- Beneficial and lasting richness resides in the search for the divine in one's own soul and in cultivating love for one's neighbor through a life oriented toward the common good. Whoever has this richness develops the ability to generate the spiritual, intellectual, and material goods that are necessary at every moment of one's life, for one's own good and for the good of society. For this reason, Cafh promotes integral human development.

Our participation in the Work of Cafh

We members of Cafh participate in the goal of the work of Cafh with our physical bodies, our intellect, our affections, and our spirit.

We participate with our *physical bodies* in the sense that, in order to collaborate in the fulfillment of the work of Cafh on Earth, we put our brains, hands, and eyes to work, and all that we possess physically and magnetically.

We participate with our *intellects* in the sense that we study and place our intellectual and creative capacity at the disposal of the fulfillment and experience of the teaching of Cafh, taking care not to distort that teaching.

We participate with our affections by observing them and by knowing them as they are. We dedicate ourselves to expand them so that we may act, understand, and feel more inclusively and in a more participatory way.

As members of Cafh, our motto is: *To make mind out of matter and matter out of mind.* This means we create knowledge, understanding and love out of the way we use our life and material goods, and we create material goods, progress, and well-being for ourselves and society out of knowledge, understanding and love.

We participate with *our spirits* in the sense that, without speculating about God's attributes, we unconditionally offer him all our love and commitment to respond to his call.

Cafh places *suitable means* at our disposal for carrying out our destiny of union with God. We consequently participate in carrying out the work of Cafh on Earth: the practice of the *Mysticism of the Heart* and the continual exercise of the *Asceticism of Renouncement*.

The practice of the *Mysticism of the Heart* and the continual exercise of the *Asceticism of Renouncement* produce in us *the reserve of energy*, which is oriented toward the common good. This reserve of energy in its turn allows us to practice *providential economy*, *live healthfully*, *develop knowledge of the divine*, and become worthy of the *gift of counsel*.

The *practice of Providential Economy* trains us to contribute to the support and expansion of the works of Cafh and to help to alleviate the needs that plague human beings. Within the range of needs, the economic aspect is very important for human development, since we need two kinds of daily bread: material bread and spiritual bread. Malnourishment in infancy, the exploitation of the weakest, the lack of health-related and educational opportunities—besides being a great and undeserved hardship—prevent people from being able to dedicate themselves to unfolding their spiritual lives. And, as if that were not enough, circumstances of injustice develop violence and aggression, conditions totally opposed to the aim of union with the divine. This is why working to occupy one place and not two in society takes on an incalculable value: we concretize in actions what we understand intellectually.

Healthful life practices multiply our energy which, when reserved and applied in a positive way, increases the wealth of magnetic forces that we transmit as health and well-being to those who are ill. The abuse of health through harmful practices leads to suffering, a loss of productivity, aging, and even premature death. Health and strength

are good omens for the future and provide a firm foundation from which to dedicate ourselves to spiritual life and to helping our fellow human beings.

Knowledge of the divine comes to us by applying ascetic and mystical practices in daily life. To the extent that we reserve energy and lead a productive life of study and prayer, oriented toward doing good, we imbue ourselves with knowledge of God.

The gift of counsel reaches us to the extent that knowledge of God is reinforced in our souls and the gift of faith illumines our understanding. In this way, we broaden our vision of life and gradually understand what generates darkness and sorrow and what to do to live a good and useful life.

They say that faith is a light we kindle not to look at, but to see what it illuminates. According to how one lives, the simplest human being can occasionally give good advice to the most learned person, and vice versa. The gift of counsel is related to knowledge of the divine and the faith that illumines our understanding; intellectual learning is a necessary condition that helps but is not enough.

In order to fulfill the works that the unfolding of humankind requires, there have to be human beings who are physically healthy, emotionally strong, intellectually creative and spiritually egoent. Everything else will follow.

Everything necessary to solve the problems that afflict us individually and collectively is placed systematically within our reach if we seek through self-knowledge both their root and their solution.

Our participation in the Great Work is to fulfill, for the world's sake, this miracle of discovering possibilities and generating resources to find solutions. By practicing the Asceticism of Renouncement and experiencing the Mysticism of the Heart, we work for the good of humankind and participate in the mission of the Divine Incarnation to come.

4. THE GREAT CURRENT

The Teaching of Cafh calls *The Great Current* the conjunction of the force of the Masters who project the Mother Idea over humanity with the force of intention, thought, and feeling we human beings generate to achieve our purposes.

When our purposes harmonize with the Mother Idea, a force is generated that accelerates our unfolding.

This powerful force that propels us to completely fulfill our own destiny with plenitude, in accordance with the Mother Idea that directs each step of the Plan of Universal Evolution, we call the *Power of the Great Current*.

Cafh is a Work that is born of the thought of the Masters and is the effective result of the fulfillment of a part of the Plan of Universal Evolution.

The Masters, who necessarily conceived Cafh, reflected it on Earth in us, the Sons and Daughters who were to give it life and organize it. These currents of a divine thought and its human response generated a force—the Power of the Great Current—that gradually pervaded the magnetic field of the ideation of Cafh and formed its body of energy.

Thus, the Power of the Great Current is generated in Cafh through the interaction of divine thought and the human response of its members, an interaction that maintains, increases, and distributes the energy of Cafh's body of energy.

The Power of the Great Current sustains the strength of Cafh: past, present, and future; divine, mental, and material.

The Power of the Great Current is the strength of the past because all the good thoughts and feelings we Sons and Daughters have had in relation to Cafh (and even our understanding and efforts by virtue of having been in contact with the Great Current) expand and are harnessed in the present in such a way that they tend to become realities that support the work of Cafh.

The Power of the Great Current is the strength of the present because of the offering of life that we make through our vows. By uniting with Cafh through a vow, we unite with the body of energy of Cafh. Through fidelity to our vow, even our most insignificant act takes on an extraordinary value and causes us to participate in the work of Cafh.

The Power of the Great Current is the force of the future because our renouncement transforms even the limited conquest we can achieve into a force that will certainly be concretized in works necessary to the unfolding of humankind. Renouncing beforehand the results of our work, we liberate it from the factors that make it limited and transitory.

The Power of the Great Current is a divine force because it is the Mother Idea expressed by the Masters of Cafh and answered by its members. This divine force protects Cafh and increases its power with the wisdom and love that the Masters irradiate through their assistance.

The Power of the Great Current is a mental force because it is the line of communication between the Masters and ourselves, the Sons and Daughters. The

Mother Idea is transmitted through the revelation that becomes life in the oral teaching. The teaching flows from the Masters' consciousness to our expectant attention, and it flows from our will to understand to the Masters' sympathetic support. Through this line of communication between the Masters and ourselves, the mental forces generated by the Great Current are deposited in the body of energy of Cafh.

The Power of the Great Current is a material force because we members of Cafh contribute our strength, possibilities, and even our life to the Great Current.

We give our strength through the reserve of our energy and through the work of physical and astral assistance. We give our possibilities through the offering of our time. We give our life by the renouncement to part of our goods—the intrinsic as well as the extrinsic ones.

Through the continuous flow of the Power of the Great Current, Cafh's body of energy is placed in contact with the universe's body of energy. It exchanges forces with similar centers that contribute their energy to form the spiritual Mother Idea of the future.

This receptive, cumulative, and expansive activity increases and renews Cafh's power.

The Power of the Great Current nourishes the mystical body of Cafh. This power is regulated through the hierarchies of Cafh and through the offering of ourselves, the offering of the Sons and Daughters.

As members of Cafh, we share in the Power of the Great Current progressively and according to the degree of our offering, expressed specifically in the fulfillment of our vows.

Participation in the Power of the Great Current requires the voluntary and continual offering of the soul and the free and loving response of the Masters. This participation is through alternating or permanent reflection.

Those of us who offer our attention and good will to the Great Work share in the Great Current by reflection: it is as though we had been touched by divine light.

Those of us who offer a substantial part of our time and energy penetrate into the Great Current and our minds are illuminated by it during times of inner reflection.

Those of us who offer our lives to the Great Work unreservedly become identified with it and are consequently taken up by the Great Current. This participation in the Power of the Great Current is always gradual, since no one could receive it in its totality without dying. We become identified with it little by little.

The Great Current is renewed daily in us through the blessings. The Masters act as divine channels and transmit the blessing to Cafh, to the GMK or GMD and to his or her Delegates. The latter, in turn, act as human channels and transmit the blessing to all the members of Cafh.

Through the transmission of the blessing, the Power of the Great Current is distributed wisely, always to the extent that we Sons and Daughters make ourselves deserving of it, according to our possibilities, efforts, and the intention that moves us.

Those of us who do not contribute with our effort to the support of the Great Work and the Power of the Great Current are sooner or later separated from the Great Current.

Not to respond responsibly to divine grace and to be lazy in fulfilling one's obligations is to live at the expense of the Great Current.

To selfishly and obstinately not respond to the Great Work and to enrich oneself deliberately at the cost of the renouncement of souls and of the Power of the Great Current is even more serious and, sooner or later, causes the separation of the Son or Daughter from the Visible Body of Cafh.

The Great Current acts continuously and beneficially in all the aspects of our life. But we can waste this grace through selfish activities that are centered on our personal, limited interest. When this happens, we not only waste the energy we receive from the Great Current, but also prevent this energy from freely circulating in our soul and from being a source of good for other souls.

How esteemed is the soul who works to become worthy of the benefit of the Great Current!

How fortunate is the soul who makes it a habit to work to live in the Great Current!

How blessed is the soul who, through her effort, identifies with the Power of the Great Current!

5. SUBSTANTIAL UNION WITH THE DIVINE MOTHER

Our soul yearns for divine union. Under different names and moved by diverse concerns, our hearts hold the desire to fulfill our destiny, to find the meaning of our lives, and to unite with all souls.

However, this yearning is not enough to attain union with the Divine Mother. Between the yearning and its fulfillment lie our ignorance, our ties, and all the desires that are contrary to that yearning.

We need means to help us embark on the process of spiritual liberation, thereby concretizing our aspiration.

Substantial union with the Divine Mother involves a process. When the Masters tell us that we will attain union by reaching the end of the spiritual road and becoming free, they are precisely telling us that there is a road to traverse so that our union with the Divine Mother will be permanent. This road presupposes different degrees of union, with different nuances of perception of this process on our part.

Union with the Divine Mother begins to become evident in our soul when our desire for freedom leads us to the spiritual road. The Divine Mother dwells in essence in our soul, but she expresses herself expansively and clearly to us when our vocation awakens.

From the moment we enter Cafh, by responding to our vocation, we experience the certainty of the presence of the Divine Mother in our soul. Perhaps we don't call this presence "Divine Mother." Perhaps we call it love, peace, or consolation. Perhaps we merely feel a great force that whispers to us that our life is resting on a solid basis. According to our previous experiences and the way we understand our vocation, we may perceive that presence as a certainty of our destiny, or as surety for the steps we need to take, or as a fervent desire not to remove our attention from the process that moves us to respond to our vocation.

Cafh gives us the means to become free: it offers us its gifts to travel the road of unfolding. It opens for us the doors of the reunion of souls, which, through participation, multiplies our forces and expands our understanding. It offers us the Teaching, the Method, and spiritual counsel so that we have a frame of reference to enable us to consolidate, gauge, and update our understanding and deepen our questions.

Once we have these means, it is up to us to traverse the path, to offer everything to this search for the divine in our soul. We do not have ready-made answers; we do not have dogmas that assure us what the meaning of life is, nor must we follow a path already traversed by others. The reunion of souls of Cafh provides us with a possible itinerary. It gives us clues to avoid pitfalls. It helps us in our difficulties and encourages us in our effort to advance on our path. It also nourishes itself from our experience, since the more we receive the more we commit ourselves to give.

Let us briefly describe why we call it *substantial* union with the Divine Mother.

Union with the Divine Mother is substantial because it is integral; it is a union of feeling, union of soul, and union of spirit.

Our contact with the Gifts of Cafh⁴ leads us to union of feeling, which acts on our body and our spiritual magnetism⁵, producing in us a feeling of liberation. This contact with the Gifts of Cafh is initially passive. We are recipients of spiritual goods rather than active participants in our unfolding. This contact, though passive, sensitizes us and, little by little, distances us from what is detrimental to our unfolding. It is as if contact with the Gifts of Cafh were refining our sensitivity and our perception, and as if we were choosing to experience what contributes to our unfolding.

Though we might not understand the nature of the sporadic freedom that comes when we separate ourselves from what goes against our unfolding, we experience that freedom through a state of growing quietude and expansiveness. This process frees our forces of energy and leads to the transmutation of our body and magnetism. Through this process, according to our teaching, we gradually shape our Body of Fire and union of feeling becomes evident in our lives.

However, union of feeling is only one aspect of union with the Divine Mother. It gradually gives us our Body of Fire, but it does not free us from our counterproductive habits, from the tendency to condition our efforts according to our definitions of success and failure. Nor does it free us from what is even more negative: the desire to obtain a personal gain from the benefits we generate through our contact with the Great Current.

In order not to spoil what we have already fulfilled or to limit the possibilities of our unfolding, we need to deepen our offering and broaden the field of our spiritual work through emotional union.

To understand how union of soul with the Divine Mother takes place, we have to deepen into the concept of freedom. Why do we say this?

We will try to define, if only in a cursory way, what freedom is within the process that leads to union with the Divine Mother.

We usually think we are free when neither people nor situations force us to act, feel, or think in a certain way. We rarely think of ourselves as agents who can restrict our own freedom.

However, within the process of unfolding that leads to union with the Divine Mother, when it comes to possibilities for exercising our freedom, we ourselves are the primary focus of attention.

According to the dictionary, freedom is a human being's natural ability to act in one way or in another, which makes the person responsible for his or her actions. However, this natural ability does not guarantee that we are truly free to act according to our conscience. Our actions may be moved by passions, desires or ignorance, and we may implicitly assume responsibilities that we don't really want to assume or provoke situations we can't handle.

The exercise of freedom could become a web of cause and effect over which we have no control. It could control our lives with invisible threads, possibly leading to painful results.

⁴ Rule, Article 5

⁵ We call spiritual magnetism the power a soul has to attract or create what's necessary for their own good and the good of those around them.

How can we guard against falling into the maze created by the exercise of freedom without being aware of the responsibilities that exercise implies?

From the point of view of our habitual states of consciousness, limitations to our freedom seem like painful situations in which we lose rights we think of as belonging to us. It is very easy to fall into the fallacy of thinking that if I can do, think, or feel something, it is all right if I do, think, or feel it. The distinction between the capacity to do something and the right to do it often becomes blurred in our thinking.

From this perspective, renouncement, self-mastery, and the effort to unfold represent relinquishments we are not always ready to accept. Many years go by, perhaps even a lifetime, before these attitudes can be completely understood and transmuted. The ambivalence created by two irreconcilable attitudes such as wanting to unfold and continuing to exercise an unrestricted freedom is the cause of much malaise.

When we are ambivalent, we work on the spiritual path, but we also work toward objectives that conflict with that path. Although we experience positive achievements at the personal level, we also create new ties, new sufferings, and setbacks. The Law of Consecutive Predestination binds us ever more securely to its unyielding webs of cause and effect.

Within the process of union with the Divine Mother, the concepts of freedom and responsibility are closely connected to the concepts of self-mastery, self-control, and limits to our actions. This means, paradoxically, that to be truly free to act and to produce good results (as we hope the results of our actions will be), we need to know what moves us, how we think, where we want to get to, and what consequences each of our actions will bring, and we have to have enough self-mastery to act in accordance with this knowledge.

It is because of this that the supreme good—union with the Divine Mother—presupposes that we will walk a path of great personal commitment, of upright action, of conduct governed by self-mastery, and of work on our soul to free it of what does not befit its nature and destiny. In other words, it presupposes that we can exercise our freedom consciously and with self-mastery.

Emotional union—sharing in the Gifts of Cafh—needs to be accompanied by union with one's soul—the perseverant ascetic-mystical work on our mind and feelings.

The practice of the Asceticism of Renouncement produces a state of renouncement in our soul. In other words, we understand the cosmic laws that rule us—the Law of Consecutive Predestination and the Arbitral Law of Possibilities—and we act accordingly. What we do, think, and feel is in harmony with our aim of union with the Divine Mother. This process leads us to union with our soul.

Sharing in the Gifts of Cafh (emotional union) and the practice of the Asceticism of Renouncement (union with our soul) train us to move from a composite state, formed by contradictory feelings and thoughts, to a simple and harmonious state. In other words, we free our mind and heart from what does not coincide with our objectives of unfolding. Self-mastery allows us to dedicate our strength, energy, and time to our aim of union with the Divine Mother. To be able to work on this process represents the exercise of our true freedom.

Union of spirit is the third aspect of substantial union with the Divine Mother.

Union of spirit is the consequence of the reserve of energy produced by union of feeling and union of soul, a reserve which is dedicated to the fulfillment of the Great Work.

Union of spirit is the offering of all our efforts to the fulfillment of the Great Work. For us, the members of Cafh, it is the experience of the mysticism of the heart to attain union with the Divine Mother.

Substantial Union with the Divine Mother is expressed in a simple, genuine, and expansive state of consciousness.

To dedicate our energy to the fulfillment of the Great Work presupposes, in practical terms, systematic renouncement through self-mastery. Our mind, feelings, and actions become centered on objectives that are harmonious with our objective of union with the Divine Mother, and our intellect and whatever training we may have, shift from being a personal possession to being a universal good.

From the operative point of view, substantial union with the Divine Mother is right action, inclusive thinking, and expansive feeling.

How can we speak of substantial union with the Divine Mother if we don't practice generosity and participation, if our objective is not to make our behavior consistent with participation with all souls?

We could ask ourselves some questions at the personal level:

Can I maintain attitudes, such as prejudices, selfishness, indifference, lack of interest in knowing things, by saying, "That's the way I am!" ? Or can I think of them as fertile field for my inner work? When I have setbacks and things don't turn out the way I like, do I look for culprits? Or do I engage in introspection and self-evaluation to understand where the consequences of acts, thoughts, and feelings are leading me? When I feel that I'm not understood, do I blame others? Or do I try to see things from their perspective? When I feel that I lack some material thing that would make me happy, do I feel deprived of a right that I think is mine? Or do I look for those who need me and help them obtain what is indispensable? When I observe inconsistent behavior in someone, do I use that perception to accuse and criticize? Or do I help with a good example and self-observation?

Our possibility for understanding how to exercise our free will so as to be able to walk with sure steps toward union with the Divine Mother depends on how we answer these and many other questions we could ask ourselves.

The Vows of Silence and Fidelity throw light on what we might need to do this. The Vow of Silence creates a climate of silence that predisposes us to hear the voice of the Divine Mother. The Vow of Fidelity provides us with the spiritual nourishment we need, making us broadly receptive to the Gifts of Cafh and active on the road to substantial union with the Divine Mother.

6. PROVIDENTIAL ECONOMY

Importance of the concept *providential economy* in the teaching of Cafh

Providential economy is central to the teaching of Cafh for it is the field in which we human beings can apply our free will in order to achieve the Mother Idea on Earth. From this broad point of view, providential economy is the attainment in daily life of the meaning of participation.

Let's make a small recapitulation of what has been said up to now in this course in *Basic Concepts* and in the section "Meaning of some terms appearing in the Teachings" in *Fundamentals of the Work of Cafh*.

Cafh presents an outline to interpret life on Earth, as we observe it to be.

Cafh maintains that the universe is ruled by a Plan of Universal Evolution and that:

- The Plan of Universal Evolution expresses the objective of manifestation, and life follows a progressive trajectory toward that objective
- This Plan is fulfilled by stages through the Mother Idea, updated at each stage
- The Mother Idea is carried out through the Great Work, and all the material, intellectual, and spiritual work that we human beings carry out to fulfill our destiny, in accordance with the Plan of Universal Evolution
- The Great Current is the conjunction of the force of the Masters—who project the Mother Idea over humanity—with the force of intention, thought, and feeling we human beings generate to fulfill our purposes
- The Great Current acquires a much greater power when these purposes of ours harmonize with the Mother Idea, and Cafh calls this force that accelerates our unfolding the Power of the Great Current
- This force moves us to fulfill our destiny with plenitude, in accordance with the Mother Idea that rules in this stage of the Plan of Universal Evolution
- The Plan of Universal Evolution is carried out thanks to the process of change that we call *Becoming*. It's obvious that in order for there to be evolution, there has to be change
- This change, as it is expressed in human life, is ruled by three laws: Law of Consecutive Predestination, the Arbitral Law of Possibilities, and the Flame

Of these three laws, the one of interest to us now in relation to Providential Economy is the Arbitral Law of Possibilities.

Even though we are subject to the Law of Consecutive Predestination, we can decide how to respond to different situations and in this way accelerate or delay our unfolding and the unfolding of humanity. In the context of the Mother Idea, this means that the way we respond to the effects of the Law of Consecutive Predestination and the speed with which we realize the ultimate end, not only of our own destiny but also that of humanity as a whole, is in our hands.

The Arbitral Law of Possibilities gives us the opportunity to correct the direction that our life is taking, for good or bad. If our actions guide us to the realization of the Mother Idea, we generate progress and plenitude; if the contrary, we cause suffering, not only for ourselves but also for humanity.

Providential Economy's field of action

What does it mean to exercise free will in such a way that it accelerates our unfolding and generates plenitude and good for all?

We have two elements with which to generate this positive process:

- Our state of consciousness
- Our resources (Within the context of this teaching, resources are material, mental, and spiritual goods that are available to us in order to live and unfold.)

Our state of consciousness provides us with a degree of wisdom that guides our choices, judgments, and actions.

Our resources are the capital we have with which to carry out what our state of consciousness tells us to do, think, or feel.

This last point is the field of providential economy.

Providential economy, according to the teaching of Cafh, is the wise use of available resources with the objective of fulfilling the ultimate purpose of life in accordance with the Mother Idea and, consequently, the Plan of Universal Evolution.

In simpler and more practical terms, providential economy means using the resources that are available to us—both personal and societal—for the good and the advancement of life on Earth.

When we speak of resources, we include all its manifestations: consumer goods, physical energy, mental energy, emotional energy, work, savings, biological resources, and everything the Earth gives us.

The resources that are available to us can be placed at the service of the fulfillment of the Mother Idea. They can also be scattered in counterproductive objectives. Providential economy helps us tip the scale toward fulfillment of the Mother Idea.

Basic concepts

Providential economy has an impact on three fields:

- *The use* of available resources
- *The reserve* of resources, or savings
- *The multiplication* of the fund of resources

Regarding the use of resources, we can speak of three fields:

- The targeted use of those resources
- Using exactly what is needed to fulfill the targeted objective and no more
- Analysis of the relationship among objectives, materials used and aims reached, to establish if the use of resources is justified in each case

Regarding multiplication of the fund of resources, we can distinguish three fields:

- Use that takes into account the renewal of the materials that are used
- Practices that increase the level of available resources
- Studies that evaluate the pursued objectives

Basic requirements

There are some basic requirements for providential economy to be put into practice:

- The sense of possession is tempered by the sense of participation
- The sense of the right to make use of resources is tempered by the sense of responsibility in the use of societal and personal goods
- The utilization and exploitation of the wealth of the Earth has to take into account societal needs for their use and conservation
- Personal goods are one's own, within the frame of reference of the common good

Scope of the concept *providential economy* and the concept *goods*

Providential means: anticipated use or prevention of use that contemplates or leads to achievement of an aim.

When we speak of providential economy, it is very important to have the aim clear. In order for providential economy to be just that, its goal must be the well-being and unfolding of all human beings.

Goods that are indispensable for everyone are:

- Basic material goods: food, potable water, clean air, energy, a place to live
- Societal goods: education, health, recreation, social relationships, work
- Spiritual goods: freedom of thought and freedom of worship; access to doctrines, teachings, methods of life, ceremonials
- Goods for the future: savings, foresight, planning, budgets adjusted to changing situations

Application of providential economy

The application of the principles of providential economy is the responsibility of each human being. Any plan that we want to implement must have as its starting point the education and awareness of individuals.

Our spiritual point of view rejects movements that impose programs, ideologies, or economic systems devised with the aim of dominating persons, groups, or countries. As members of Cafh, we favor education that promotes spiritual advancement, participation, and respect for others as agents of peaceful and productive change. These values show us the best and most productive uses for the resources we have available.

Providential economy includes, but is in no way limited to, the management of material resources. Providential economy is, as we said above, a wise and participatory way of

administering material, mental, and spiritual resources in order to place them at the service of the fulfillment of the Mother Idea.

In order to reflect on the application of the Mother Idea in daily life, we can base ourselves on this concept: “*Occupy one place in the world and not two.*” We could perhaps argue that we don’t know how much one place is. Although we don’t have irrefutable answers to this question, we can analyze the subject by placing our needs beside the needs of other human beings to find their place in the world. The meaning of participation that these reflections can awaken in us will surely help us to find one place and not two in the society we live in.

Since this is such a broad subject, we refer to our method of life to find guidelines in the use of resources. Some aspects of the education that Cafh gives us in terms of how to apply providential economy are: the meditation, the retrospective examination, frugality, self-mastery, temperance, the teaching of participation and love, and experiences in retreats.

However, we would like to include in this teaching an article on savings because we consider it interesting for the purpose of reflecting on the practical mechanisms that enter into play in the fulfillment of such cosmogonic plans as the *Plan of Universal Evolution*.

Although the *Plan of Universal Evolution* has dimensions that are difficult to understand, in reality the “working” part that pertains to human beings is fulfilled through an infinite number of simple and concrete steps taken by each of us. Let us take as an example the *discovery* of savings as a tool of individual and societal economy. This concept and its application mark a transcendent step in the history of human unfolding.

“When ancient gatherers discovered the benefit of agriculture, they incorporated into their knowledge the concept that, centuries later, economic theory would develop about savings. The reserve of a small quantity of seeds had the potential to become the next year’s harvest. In other words, they could obtain an additional benefit *by sacrificing part of their present consumption*. Today we would associate that reserve with the concept of *investment*.

It’s good to keep in mind that there was no way of guaranteeing the next harvest. Lack of rain or an unexpected hailstorm could spoil the harvest and mean reverses at the time of the harvest. Therefore, it was thought that it would also be prudent to *systematically* reserve part of the previous production to be able to meet the needs caused by unforeseen events.

By understanding this, these peoples incorporated what is usually considered a basic principle of savings in economic literature.”⁶

⁶ Aníbal Virgili: *Concept, motivations and theoretical determinants of saving*.

MYSTICISM OF THE HEART

MESSAGES OF THE FOUNDER GRAND MASTER KNIGHT

THE DIVINE MOTHER'S TREASURES

Message of 1953

I give you, my Sons, my Daughters, the treasures of my Heart: distribute them.

Take my eternal experience, gained through the construction and destruction of universes, to show you the immeasurable depth of Eternity, which is always present, never created, never destroyed.

This Eternal experience will open your eyes to the world, and you will watch the changes and the twists and turns of time as a child watches the passing of birds in the sky.

And while you repeat the Ineffable Name one and forty-nine times, what was will be again and what is will already have ceased to exist.

With your eyes fixed there, your lips repeating the Holy Name, your strength flowing through the forty-nine links, you will be immortal.

Thus, taking you in my arms, I've placed the Mystical Chain around your neck.

Take my strength and my power; close the lion's jaws with your strong hands.

Conquer and conquer again. Your strength is my strength and my only strength is to give myself to you.

When you have learned that the vital currents flowing through you travel throughout the universe and return to you, bringing you the gracious gift of the Eternity traversed, you will be invincible. From that time onward your sword will never break and no one will be able to prevail against it.

Take, then, my Love, all my Love.

To be wise is to attain liberation. To be good is to contribute to the salvation of the world. To be pure is to equal the Angelic Hosts. But to know how to love is to identify with Eternity itself.

Do not disdain even the most imperfect love, for it carries the impression of Divine Love.

Guard your love as zealously as you guard your diamond beneath its golden crown.

You have arrived through eight stages at the balance of life and death, for your love renounces life and conquers death.

Take, my Sons, my Daughters, all my Treasures: the Ineffable Name, the Invincible Sword, the Precious Stone, the Tree of Life and the Water from the Fountain of my own heart.

I give it all to you, because I know you have channeled the forces springing from your interior to the outside, in order to give and give again; for Tranquility, Strength and Love are the world's salvation.

Take, my Sons, my Daughters, the Treasures of my heart and distribute them.

CULTIVATE SOULS

Message of 1955

Open the doors of your heart to all souls, Sons and Daughters of Cafh.

Love, that powerful magnet of souls, will attract them.

Cultivate young souls with your love; try not to miss even a single one or let a single one stray. Offer all your blood for them if necessary, guide them along the path of faith, beauty and the joy of being alive.

Cultivate with your love the souls of those who have been entrusted to you.

Do not let spiritual life be disconnected from human life; let it be a single expression of Divinity.

May each home be a Table, and each Table a home!

Cultivate with your love all the Sons' and Daughters' endeavors; their hopes, yearnings, works and possibilities.

Every experience is worth living if one finishes what one begins.

The most complete and divine fruit can be extracted from the smallest and most insignificant things.

Cultivate chosen souls with your love.

Deliver them from danger, difficulties and obstacles so that they may reach the consummation of their divine desire.

The supreme end of Cafh is to lead souls to the summit of perfection, and chosen souls are an affirmation, an image, a certainty that the perfect end can be attained even in this life.

Open the doors of your heart to all souls, Sons and Daughters of Cafh! Open the doors of your heart even to the souls who are about to come.

A great number of Initiates and other beings are ready to come to earth, accompanying the Divine Redeemer.

They need spiritual fathers and mothers who will assist their descent to earth with prayer and chastity.

They will need fathers and mothers to give them a suitable body to fulfill their mission on earth, their great Mission of Love.

Give your life and blood for souls if necessary.

Only love which gives, which does not ask for itself, which sacrifices and lends itself to voluntary suffering can redeem the world and save all souls!

THE MESSAGE OF RENOUNCEMENT

Message of 1957

Sons and Daughters of Cafh: look to the valley of the world. Souls there are clamoring for their salvation and receive for an answer filtered rays of light, rumblings from profaned abysses, prophetic voices of doom or voices of hope transmitted by intermediaries!

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, why not reach to all souls to share with them your experience of Renouncement?

Carry your living Message to souls, your Message of Renouncement. Only by uprooting the creed of Possession from the hearts of human beings will they be able to recover and live.

Carry your Message of Renouncement to souls: as mysticism, as creed, as science, as technique, as ethics, as supreme wisdom.

May the Sponsored Sons and Daughters carry their Message of Renouncement of preferences.

May the Solitary Sons and Daughters carry their Message of Renouncement of things.

May the Ordained Sons and Daughters carry their Message of Renouncement of life.

Renouncement is the Law of the future world and you are among the precursors who live this Law which will be the way of life of all human beings to come.

Will the Sons and Daughters of Renouncement be so consistent in fulfilling their Mission that they will prevent the imminent destruction which will precede the era of Sakib?

Carry your Message of Renouncement to souls, Sons and Daughters of the Mother, emanating from your whole Being this Renouncement which has become light, understanding and life in you.

Descry with eagle eyes this future world, be heralds and experimenters of this new age to come.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, through your Renouncement clearly identify the present-day values which are about to crumble. May it be granted you, as a clairvoyant gift of experience, to glimpse and prepare a world where sages and saints will be priests, statesmen and guides of humanity; where those who regulate and distribute the economic flow of nations will be considered rulers of those nations; where those who produce will be the benefactors of humanity; where intermediaries between God and human beings will disappear, as well as those between teacher and student, producer and needy.

Carry your Message of Renouncement to all human groups, to all souls without discrimination, not as intermediaries but by uniting with them—with all their problems, anxieties and distress.

Be students among students, workers among workers, disinherited among the disinherited, skillful among the skillful. Renouncement will let everyone see that only the eagerness for possession, as a mental image and emotional state, is what separates human beings into groups and castes.

Teach that Renouncement is life.

Why be subject to sorrow and death—the invariable Law of Renouncement—when Renouncement, by divesting life of possession, offers permanent participation in life?

Sons and Daughters of Cafh: carry your Message of Renouncement to souls by participating in the new ideas and different social philosophies so that you may gather what is good and real in each of them; by participating in the new Religion of the Future which is now gestating in all the spiritual movements of the world. Teach souls that they are all Sons and Daughters of the same Light.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh: carry your Message of Renouncement to all human beings without discrimination. Teach them that the good of nations is not the result of wars and revolutions but is in a capacity to unfold, fruit of sacrifice, work, migrations and renouncement to what is superfluous.

Carry your Message of Renouncement by living the life of all and sharing in the ideas of all. The first step to teaching Renouncement is divesting oneself of oneself—of one's tastes, of one's goods, of one's very life!

Guide souls toward that new untroubled world; it is urgently necessary, this is the time.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, carry your Message of Renouncement to a distressed and waiting world.

SPIRITUAL TRUTH

Message of 1961

Sons and Daughters of Cafh! Spiritual Life is the truth, make of spiritual life a truth.

Signs are signs; tradition is tradition; empiricisms are empiricisms; possibilities are possibilities; but only knowledge which is essential, determined, formal and evident is a truth.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh: make a truth of your Spiritual Life! Make of spiritual postulates something true, living and evident!

May the Sons and Daughters differentiate, above all, divine knowledge from metaphysical knowledge.

Divine knowledge is the result of intuitive illumination, mystical exaltation, static sublimation. It is also the result of intellectual speculation and the study of texts and traditions. However, whenever study or the sublimation of possible or contingent knowledge departs from a supposed truth, it is never an evident truth. There is no evident truth without essential knowledge of the subject. The only evident truth of the divine is fathomless silence, the unknown, mystery.

Metaphysical knowledge is either possible or evident. The Sons and Daughters of Cafh are to proclaim above all the metaphysical knowledge which has become or is about to become evident. The knowledge which most takes root in new souls is always concrete evident knowledge which moves toward well-defined acts through experimental testing. May this always be the characteristic of the Teaching of Cafh. Knowledge has to be given shape and demonstrated. A great deal of metaphysical knowledge is ready to be made evident.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, make of Spiritual Life a truth.

Many animistic systems, despite the very good intentions and good will behind them, mix supernatural teachings with divine ones. They confuse souls who are anxious to distinguish the possible from the true. They also present intellectual speculations or theological conceptions as evident truths, temporarily blinding souls and later leaving them in doubt and disillusionment.

Other systems present physical or psychic phenomena as supernatural phenomena. They are then promptly refuted by deep psychology or neurological biochemistry, which explains how to modify psycho-neural disorders with appropriate medications.

All this keeps souls away from the search for truth and delays them on the Path to their Inner Liberation.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, Spiritual Life is Truth!

Give souls, above all, the Doctrine with a clear, precise, demonstrable Teaching!

May the teaching be clear and essential. It must eliminate wordiness as well as excessively metaphorical language and bookish culture. Faced with the volume of human, metaphysical and spiritual knowledge—which no human being can assimilate all by him or herself—Sons and Daughters need to organize a brief, concise, automatic system of

information which the teachers of Cafh will be developing until such a system can be replaced by electronic scientific brains.

May the Teaching be precise, with relevant language and terms which have already been coined and applied. Language is the soul of deeds, yet this cannot really be so if one uses confusing or misapplied words. It is necessary to distinguish clearly between physical and supernatural states, and between supernatural states and spiritual ones.

Each situation or concept is to have its own specific word—and if a word is not known it must be created. A new doctrinal language is necessary, a true philosophy of the word.

May the Teaching be demonstrable. Everything you teach souls must be evidenced, or expounded as general information or as a possibility. Only the truth reaches souls—or the possible truth when it is presented as possible.

Teach that spiritual culture does not lead human beings to ignore the general culture, since spiritual culture is part of the general culture. Of course what is meant is the well-grounded culture which forms harmonious human beings and not a narrowly specialized character.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, give the truth!

With the truth, the Son and Daughter's physical, mental and spiritual currents will be transformed, and the various states of consciousness will be surpassed and sublimated, bringing the soul closer to the divine mystery.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, give the truth!

Do not disdain to give souls the social sciences, since the Message of Renouncement is the social science par excellence and is the only spiritual current which can give a mystical body to the new movements of humanity.

Renouncement is, above all, the mysterious law which takes the soul into the divine mysteries.

Sons and Daughters of Cafh, Spiritual Life is Truth!

EXPANSION

Message of 1962

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, help Cafh expand over the whole earth!

All souls are ready and capable. They are anxiously waiting and will not settle for any more delays.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by centering interiorly on the Message of Renouncement.

Practice continuously the ascetic exercises you were taught from the time you embraced Cafh, but do them only in a mechanical, technical way. All the ascetic exercises—even the meditation as correctly taught you—are to be, above all, muscular, phonetic, suggestive, cerebrospinal exercises. Ascetic exercises which are done for the purpose of sharpening the senses, clarifying the mind, strengthening the will, accentuating feelings, giving mastery over the physical body or over thoughts, have to be discarded. Although it is almost impossible for the beginner to engage in the learning process without aspiring to any achievement whatsoever, such exercises are nevertheless to be regarded as mere scholarly classifications and transcended with experience. Some mystics put off the practice of *ascetic exercises without attainment* for later, but it is then nearly impossible for the soul to give up what she has by then established as a permanent gain.

Ascetic exercises without attainment introduce the soul into her interior freely and by means of an unadorned mysticism, emptying her of everything. They reflect the Message of Renouncement without barriers, uniquely, communicating through the power of inner similitude with all souls.

This is the beginning of the expansion of Cafh.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by becoming aware of the Message of Renouncement!

Gain profound control over yourselves. A person who does not know herself, who does not attain self-awareness, is unable to make contact with souls or gain access to their inner being. It is necessary to find answers to the simplest questions, such as: Who am I really? What do I really feel, as opposed to what I think I feel? Feelings escape out of a person's hands and hide. Without knowing what one really feels there is no self-awareness, there is only awareness-reaction. The soul who explores her inner self and constantly controls it gains possession over her deep awareness and of her feeling of the Message of Renouncement.

To gain self-awareness, to have the feeling of the Message of Renouncement, is to unleash in souls a chain reaction of the same clear feeling—it is to expand Cafh.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by giving souls clear and evident definitions of the supernatural expression of the Message of Renouncement.

Religious faith, metaphysical experiments and individual realizations have always been elements bringing human beings face to face with unknown possibilities. But now many people wish to replace religious faith and individual experiences with simple faith and

scientific experiment. It is crucial to allow souls to reevaluate their beliefs and dogmas unreservedly, so that the scope of faith and experience may be unforeseeably vast.

May the Sons and Daughters transmit the Message of Renouncement by giving it its entire supernatural reach, but not beyond what is evidenced. Thus souls may leave the closed circle of their mental schemas, knowing what they are and are not capable of, knowing what is possible for them to elucidate and what still remains in mystery. Souls need to know what their true inner possibilities are and how to manage their inner forces. They need to distinguish which metaphysical achievements will stand up to analysis, which individual experiences are possible, and which hypotheses are in the process of being evidenced. Teach souls that they need not be ashamed of what they do not know or disguise it ignominiously. Teach them instead that the unknown is always God Himself.

Clear and honest definitions are the Message of Renouncement made word in souls.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by being in contact with and in the presence of souls! Be with souls permanently, closely and dispassionately. Souls thirst for the Message of Renouncement and for the company of the soul who proclaims it with her life. Souls are no longer won over with words or promises or with new doctrines or polemics. They are won over by the truth made flesh and ever present in the teacher of presence: in similarity of feeling, in participation, in mutual understanding. Every Son and Daughter is testimony of the Message of Renouncement and the whole group is often made responsible for the word received in their presence, but when teacher and disciple keep together and live together they spontaneously find solutions to all the problems. When the master and disciple are together and share the same life, all problems are spontaneously solved. The Message of Renouncement, with the presence of the Sons and Daughters who live it, demonstrates that the human problem is not in having or not having, believing or not believing, being right or wrong, belonging to one social class or another, to one group or another. The problem lies in acquiring the possibilities necessary to unfold purely and simply as human beings; the spontaneous capacity to distinguish between the attainment of a qualitative victory and a quantitative one; the discernment to recognize spiritual freedom without confusing it with instinctual freedom. Instinctual freedom is fictitious because it gives the false impression that the soul is doing what she wants, while spiritual freedom gives the being the precise capacity for placing herself within the whole human group and, consequently, within the Mystical Body of Cafh.

When the Message of Renouncement is present in souls the expansion of Cafh moves swiftly along.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother! Expand Cafh by proclaiming the Message of Renouncement! Respond exteriorly to souls if you carry them within your heart. Give souls the proclamation of the Message of Renouncement according to their measure. To go to souls is to love them, understand them, share in their needs and aspirations, enter into their environment and customs. To give a magnificent gift to a child living in a sordid room is an illusory charity; to provide an elegant dress for a girl in a tenement is to cover a wound without washing it; to offer a young man a modern sports field in the slums is to mock poverty. It is like proclaiming unattainable ideas to those who need ideas for immediate solutions.

The Message of Renouncement must go to souls by degrees—according to the environment or place they live in. The Sons and Daughters need to carry the proclamation of the

Message of Renouncement beyond religious or political proclamations. They need to carry it as a single spiritual voice which understands and shares the growing need of human beings of all classes and all races to improve their living conditions. This is a spiritual voice which exhorts all human beings to accept the sacrifices inherent to action and to the present time; to understand that what they might lose on one plane is always compensated for on another. The Message of Renouncement encourages economic reorganization, a rise in moral values, a loss of comfortable dogmatic certainties, a greater spiritual unfolding.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by giving a precise Teaching!

Transmit the Teaching to souls with ever-renewed methods. The Teachings employed to educate Sons, Daughters and souls have always been adjusted to the moment, to the circumstances and to souls' capacity for assimilating them. We have used various methods, doctrines and schools that have been progressively formed, adapted and surpassed. The teachers must transmit the Message of Renouncement to the Sons and Daughters with clear, succinct and precise notes, always distinguishing the possible from the evidenced, based always on the mystical tradition, the philosophy of history and the exact sciences. To wish to always maintain one method of Teaching is to place those who give it in the past, while the Teaching of the Message of Renouncement is the infinite present.

The Teaching itself is an indispensable factor of expansion. It is the most plausible means for new contacts, for vigorous and prosperous foundations. It is the means the Sons and Daughters have at their disposal to place themselves in direct contact with souls.

With the Teaching, the Sons and Daughters understand their milieu and are the test crew who prepare in different places promising ground for establishing Cafh. They keep enthusiasm alive in these places and become a force of attraction for aspirants in the place they live and within their sphere of influence.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by working for the Integrity of the Great Work!

All the Sons and Daughters expand Cafh with their daily work. Work in light of the Message of Renouncement becomes living mysticism, a sanctifier of matter.

The Sons and Daughters constitute the Integrity of the Great Work with the fulfillment of their commitment in the world, which contributes to the formation of civic and spiritual society. Only through work is it possible for humankind to supersede the inadequate structures and establish the reign of peace over the earth. Rebellions only foment dissatisfaction without presenting a single concrete solution. Only work provides spontaneous and continuous solutions and is the basis for the establishment of Providential Economy.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by using the Power of the Great Current scrupulously!

A steady ray of light breaks down all resistance. Emission of the steady ray of Foa makes the expansion of Cafh a mathematical fact. But the strength of Foa which is made personal use of or is wasted due to inertia is an irretrievable dynamic surplus.

The steady ray of Foa increases the Son and Daughter's personal-impersonal magnetism and, consequently, continuously increases the number of Sons and Daughters. It is like the refraction of a ray of light in a water drop. Likewise it multiplies the Stability Radii and increases the Works of Cafh a hundredfold.

The steady ray of Foa disintegrates all component obstacles and illumines the Message of Renouncement in all souls, strengthening the Sons' and Daughters' possibilities for spiritual unfolding.

The Power of the Great Current is sustained by the Sons and Daughters and all of them are indispensable for the appropriate expansion of Cafh. Therefore the number of souls consecrated in the Ordination is to increase daily, and Spiritual Directors must bring souls to the Ordination who have a suitable disposition and the necessary qualities.

The Tables and the Sons and Daughters are to be led by Ordained, although the number of these Ordained is always to be limited to the needs of the Tables. But the number of Sons and Daughters consecrated in Community life is to grow constantly. Without these souls the total expansion of Cafh is impossible, for they substantiate total offering, they are a living example of the possibilities of the Message of Renouncement. In all the places where a Table of Solitaries exists, there should also be a Community of Ordained Sons or Daughters.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, expand Cafh by strengthening in your souls, day by day, the meaning of the Vows!

The Vow is the seal of the Divine Unknown in the soul, of the Being before the mystery of Eternity: it is God in the soul of the Son and Daughter.

The Vow causes the Sons and Daughters to share in the Divinity.

The Vow is an indelible seal, a confirmation upon earth of the Universal Law of Renouncement, a forger of human beings who know how they feel and who are masters of their knowledge.

The Vow makes of you essential Unity because in the Vows Son and Daughter unite substantially with the Divine Mother and the Message of Renouncement expands to the whole Universe and is simply Renouncement.

In Substantial Union there are no Sons or Daughters but only your soul as a Divine Prototype within the Mystical Body of Cafh. There is only one physical body, that of the Integrity of the Great Work. There is only one expression of the Son and Daughter in the world: the Power of the Great Current. There is only one Divine Prototype, each one of you in substantial Union with the Divine Mother. Neither here nor there, neither with this or with that, neither they nor I, but Beatitude. And it is in a fraction of fractions of an instant that Beatitude is attained.

There cannot be two, then—neither death nor decay, neither old age nor changes nor ways—only Beatitude.

Sons and Daughters of the Mother, help Cafh expand over the whole earth, in the whole Universe!

MESSAGES OF THE GMK II

THE MYSTICISM OF THE HEART

Message of 1991

The Mysticism of the Heart is achieved through letting go of supports, so that the everyday personality is made evident; through humility, so that life is accepted and its law—renouncement—understood; through interior immobility, so that the true identity is revealed; and through participation and reversibility, so that the capacity is developed to unite with all beings in a real and effective way and to fulfill the soul's destiny of Substantial Union with the Divine Mother.

The acquired personality is a system of automatic and unconscious conditionings we identify ourselves with to the point of considering it our identity. This system is formed and maintained by habits, impulses and desires that move us in the direction of the desire for power, the acquisition of wealth, the need for success and social approval. All of these supports, which the everyday personality so yearns to conquer, are ephemeral, and we know it. Because of this, the more we express ourselves through our acquired personality, the more our acquired personality grows for fear of losing the supports that sustain it. In this state, we never find enough supports that give us the security that we yearn for so much.

In order to make this situation evident and be able to break with this personality, we need to learn to do without these supports, and open ourselves to the emptiness of leaving the illusory security of the known without yet knowing where that will take us.

We cannot find security if we don't disattach ourselves from our illusory supports; that is to say, from our illusion of feeling secure with them.

A humble attitude can be of great help in this work of disattachment because, in order to leave the supports behind, we have to accept our ignorance, our lack of understanding of ourselves; we have to disattach ourselves from our possessions, material as well as spiritual. Indeed, these are what sustain our personality.

Life has its law and we cannot change it; in order to fill ourselves with the divine we have to empty ourselves of illusions, of what we believe ourselves to be and possess. When the pitcher is full, it is necessary to empty it in order to change its contents.

Disattachment and humility take us towards interior immobility.

When we free ourselves from expectations, wants and the desire for possession, our interior movements quiet down naturally.

We don't hope for anything because we don't need anything.

We don't want anything because our consciousness is fixed on the Divine Mother.

We don't seek to compete for material or spiritual gains, because our only good, our only security is in the Divine Mother.

In this quietude, in this interior silence, we can discover other souls, their needs, their happiness and their sufferings. In this silence we participate in the world of all souls, being one soul among souls.

This participation is effective in its interior as well as its exterior aspects.

Interior participation leads us to include ourselves in the whole, to know that nothing is outside of us nor separate from us. Time, as well as space, takes on a new meaning, since everything is in us, here and now.

Exterior participation is the fruit of interior participation. What we do, feel, and think responds to the needs of souls. We respond by learning to use our resources wisely; by preparing ourselves and doing what the milieu we live in requires that we know and do, setting aside our preferences; by attending to those who surround us; by learning to listen and, above all, by unfolding and achieving in our life the good that we want for humanity.

When we participate, we integrate ourselves harmoniously into the human group in every area of activity. We understand differences, we collaborate, and we help and assume responsibility. The need of another soul is our need; the happiness of all souls is our happiness.

In participating, we recognize ourselves as an integral part of humanity and as a result we respond with silence, humility, effective work, disinterested love, knowledge and discernment. Our consciousness projects itself as a love that relieves, protects, and enlightens.

Spontaneous knowledge of one's own and others' needs transforms the consciousness of being into a powerful and efficient intention that one applies to a precise and integral work done for the good of others. This consciousness of being, active and participative, expresses the reversibility of renouncement. We have the capacity of transmuting the strength of our consciousness into an intention that is concretized in specific actions, appropriate to the work and the circumstances. At the same time, these actions give us an overall vision that stimulates the expansion of our conscience.

Reversibility is accepting everything and, at the same time, putting limits on what we allow ourselves to do, think and feel; it is suffering the vicissitudes of life while maintaining interior peace and harmony; it is being with everyone without taking sides; it is knowing how to stick to an opinion when it is necessary; it is even understanding when good acts can become counterproductive and accepting the change in the direction that this understanding demands.

Reversibility is understanding all points of view and, at the same time, opting in each moment for the most appropriate one for our unfolding and for the work to be done. It is fixing oneself on an idea as a point of reference, but without becoming dogmatic in it. It is not limiting reality to what we can perceive or understand. It is knowing that our perception is not complete, that just beyond the horizon there always exists an unknown possibility.

The attitude of reversibility determines the breadth of the field that consciousness covers and shows that the diverse and apparently contradictory aspects of reality are complimentary.

The attitude of reversibility is the point of reference of our renouncement: disattachment is transformed into liberation; pain into wisdom; interior immobility into expansive consciousness; work into participation.

The Mysticism of the Heart begins with the renouncement of our acquired personality, is sustained by our humility, takes flight with our participation in the lives of all souls,

but becomes our own life through reversibility. Then we no longer run the risk of turning back, of falling again into the illusory games of the acquired personality. We understand that renouncement is the law of life: that to have nothing—overcoming the desire to possess—is wealth; that to gain nothing—overcoming acting in a selfish way, ambition and the desire to impose ourselves—is serenity; that being nothing—overcoming the desire to be noticed—is to reach our identity, to be in the Divine Mother through all souls.

LIFE IN HARMONY

Message of 2001

Let us pay attention to our method so that we can keep our spiritual work well directed.

The method of Cafh is a response to the fact that our interior and exterior lives are inseparably intertwined and that our spiritual unfolding takes place within relationships.

The method organizes the reunion of souls of Cafh into groups, and these groups into Tables.

The objective and work of the groups of Cafh is to have the kind of relationship that we desire for all humankind. This they aim to achieve now. The groups become teams as they work to pursue this common purpose.

As group members of Cafh we come together or, in other words, re-unite: we re-make the ties we have with each other on the basis of our awareness that we are in participation.

The aim and work of the Table is to nourish and support the spiritual unfolding of its members, providing each group and each member of a group with the best environment for attaining this objective. This work of the Table is also a form of teamwork.

All beings are united, even if we are not always aware of this union. Teamwork awakens, maintains, and increases this awareness.

We all have different backgrounds, life histories, ethnicities, beliefs, and characteristics. To prevent these differences from separating us, we engage in teamwork with the purpose of unfolding spiritually and understanding and loving each other.

Individual development and the development of the group are interdependent. We balance and attune our individual work with our work in the group. Each of us works on him or herself while simultaneously working as part of the group. As an entity which is responsible for its members, the group works both on itself and on the common goal.

The group is the necessary field in which we apply and evaluate our inner work on ourselves. Through our participation in the group, we can verify whether the subjective impression we have of our spiritual life in moments of introspection really matches the way we act.

Inner work is liable to subjective evaluations in which we are both the judge and the one who is being judged. Relationships in the group let us evaluate our inner work more objectively. How meaningful would our spiritual work be if it did not result in progress in our relationship with the group and our relationships with each of its members?

Affection among group members is the result of each member's acceptance and respect for the others, and of individual actions which are consistent with that attitude.

We generate love by accepting differences, feeling what others feel, sharing joys and sorrows, supporting each other, working together, and striving to grow in mutual understanding and participation.

When we find ourselves in a conflict with someone in the group or with the group itself, how can we improve our response?

Teamwork is based on an open attitude—free of prejudices, defensiveness and self-justifications—so that we can receive feedback. It is based on a firm sense of commitment which sustains us when difficulties arise.

Each of us is an integral part of the group. The mistake or success of any given member of the group is the mistake or success of all of its members.

Our love for all the members of the group is the channel for the strength that unites and gives life to the group. Each one of us is responsible for the group and all of us are responsible for every group member, so we need to listen, validate and persevere in teamwork.

The group that works on itself as a team faces the same challenge as society at large in overcoming antagonisms and disagreements among its members. In other words, the group has to deal with the same competitive, aggressive and personalistic impulses that each of us brings from our past and our milieu.

The two most common reactions to a conflict are to assert our way of thinking over the person we think has caused the conflict—trying to discredit and invalidate him or her—or to leave the group, attempting by this action to undermine its validity.

Asserting ourselves over others or discrediting them might make us feel well and successful, but it dis-integrates the group. If we allowed ourselves to be led by this impulse we would be destroying whatever good we had been attempting to build.

To leave a group when a conflict arises is to run away, to escape from a reality that we have neither the desire nor the capacity to assimilate and overcome, but which will continue to exist, showing us the steps we refuse to take.

If we want to improve these responses we need to view every conflict as a challenge, a difficulty that we need to overcome if we want to continue developing as a group and also as individuals.

Let us remember some of the means that we have within our reach for overcoming conflicts:

- Self-analysis
- Objective observation of the group
- Dialogue
- Constructive strategies reached by consensus

Being an integral part of a group implies having an implicit commitment to the common goal, which we need to make explicit by developing our capacity for accepting the personal characteristics of our companions and the inner strength to see what we need to work on in ourselves in order to harmonize well with the group.

If we want to unfold spiritually we need to make an effort and face resolutely every situation that comes up, especially the difficulties in relationships that require us to recognize our limitations.

Working as a team is, in practice, learning to live in harmony. This, perhaps, is the objective of our existence in this world. Material progress can allow us to live longer and more comfortably, but this obviously cannot be the reason for our life's work. As a matter of fact, we can learn to live in harmony whatever our material condition is. In order to do this we first need to recognize that we share life with all human beings, and

then that we need to learn to live as inseparable parts of the great body of humankind.

Let us work, Sons and Daughters of Cafh, for the health of humankind and the happiness we can all achieve. Let us begin by learning to live harmoniously in our spiritual group, in our family, in our society.

Mystical union will be the consequence.

EVERYDAY REALITY

Message of 2002

Wisdom is the aim of the well-known aphorism, “know thyself,” and the aphorism shows us the process by which we can attain such wisdom. It also tells us the point of departure for initiating this process of knowing ourselves: in the here and now.

As a parallel, we could say that working to expand our state of consciousness—and, consequently, to deepen our mysticism—means not only acknowledging the ideal that moves us and the process needed for living up to it. It also means *acknowledging the mandatory point of departure: that is, the state of consciousness we are currently operating in*. This recognition is a firm foundation on which we can base our work of unfolding.

Although we think we know ourselves, and although we are confident that we perceive and interpret reality as it really is, these subjective judgments do not sufficiently tell us of our real state of consciousness. The limitations of our perceptiveness—together with our tendency to deny what we don’t want to recognize, and to justify ourselves about what we don’t want to accept—calls into question our subjective interpretations about the way we are, what happens to us, and what happens in the world at large.

Ordinarily, our state of consciousness is not evident to us.

What are we to do about this?

Let us observe the state of the world as it is today.

The world is not outside ourselves; we are the world. There is no basis for thinking that our relationship with God can be better than our interpersonal relationships. It is impossible that the mysticism we could experience is of a different nature than the relationship we have with humankind, which we are part of. What we observe outside ourselves as discrimination, injustice or privilege reveals what we have inside. There is no “outside” in life, no “other.” Everything is integrated, however much our false perceptions and defense mechanisms tell us something different. If we observe the world around us, we will receive evidence of the state of consciousness all human beings are living in, including ours.

But it is not enough to observe the world. It is very easy to escape by saying, “I am not really like that.” Let us recognize that we participate in this general state of consciousness, no matter what we think about ourselves and our mysticism.

To leave the vicious circle of self-deception and be able to recognize our present state of consciousness, we also need to rely on the evidence with which our life provides us.

What might this evidence be?

Let us be aware that to live is to interact, and that everything we do affects us, those around us, our society, and the world we live in. These effects are expressed in new interactions, and so forth. Relationship is what we call this succession of interactions, which are facts. Our evidence is thus provided by our relationship with life, expressed in daily actions.

How are we to evaluate this evidence? In order not to limit ourselves to an abstract interpretation of the facts, let us consider the effects we produce with our actions.

Let us observe, analyze and evaluate impartially the reactions we produce around us and find out what stage we are in, in the process of our unfolding: in other words, find out our present state of consciousness.

In order to recognize our conduct, let us broaden our perspective and observe the two components that inform us about that conduct: what we think we say or do and what the environment perceives that we say and do. Let us then validate the environment's answer. Next, let us compare those two perspectives and contrast them; then let us draw our conclusions. If we hit a window, it is not our hand but the window that shows us whether the blow was light or hard enough to cause a break. If we hurt ourselves when we broke the window, it doesn't make sense to blame the window, since we were the ones who hit it in the first place.

Let us also observe the environment's responses to different kinds of behavior. When we think we know everything and give opinions about everything, when we stop at nothing to get what we want, when we measure others with much stricter standards than those we apply to our own conduct, when we seek privileges, invoking rights that we deny others, when we demand justice by accusing others without foundation, when we only validate those who think like we do and form separate groups with them, we receive very different answers from our environment than when we take our place as one among many with an open attitude to learning, when we are conscious of what we produce in our environment and, above all, when we also act consistently with that consciousness.

Let us observe what our way of life reveals to us.

To what extent do we provide for our needs, emotional as well as material, and for the needs of those who depend on us? Do we accept our troubles and problems, or do we unload them onto others? Do we run away from our conflicts or do we make ourselves vulnerable? Do we open ourselves to communication and assume our responsibility for those conflicts? How constructive is our participation in the groups we belong to? Are we supportive?

Let us observe the influence we exercise on our surroundings and the quality of the family ties we create, as well as the quality of our friendships and our relationships with coworkers. Do we have an encouraging or a depressing effect on others? Do we generate fear, anxiety, oppressiveness, or joy and companionship? Do we accept feedback and generate harmony, or do we feed on self-justifications? Do we limit our relationships to the small circle of those who give us unconditional approval?

Let us observe the attitude with which we relate to others and the conclusions this leads us to.

If we tend to be aggressive and competitive in daily life, we see interaction in terms of winning and losing. We treat life as a battlefield where, in order not to lose, we have to win at all costs.

If we tend to be passive in daily life, we think life owes us material things and happiness, and we interpret the things that happen to us in terms of luck or misfortune.

We might even blame others for what happens to us, and use this perspective to explain our problems and the negative reactions we cause in others.

If we have a collaborative attitude in daily life, if we are determined to give our best for the sake of the common good—while respecting each others' space and without being invasive—we promote a similar response in our environment. The capacity for mediation, for generating benefits and well being, and even the capacity for leadership, are usually the result of generous and proactive attitudes.

Our attitudes evidence the degree of our integration in a group and to what degree our state of consciousness encompasses our environment.

How do we experience our relationship with God—our mysticism—when we live centered in our personal problems? Most probably, we mentally place ourselves next to God, contemplating a world that is foreign to both of us. Such a relationship with God implies a denial of our reality and, especially, of our responsibility for that reality.

What happens in our relationship with God—our mysticism—when we work on opening ourselves to the environment and recognizing our state of consciousness? We start, here and now, taking seriously our spiritual work on our relationships.

What we are today is the only possible point of departure from which we can move toward union with God. Our relationship with God is also nourished by what we are today and is expressed in our dialogue with daily life.

Since our dialogue with life shows us the effects of our interactions—and this is our point of departure—why, then, don't we put into practice the norms which make dialogue fruitful to our relationship with life?

Let us observe, listen, validate and *assimilate* the answers that are generated through our relationships with others.

To be fully conscious of the message the environment gives us, it is not enough to listen and validate. We need to assimilate that message. It is one thing to be informed of something, and very different to incorporate that information into our understanding. Our state of consciousness expands when, besides receiving information, we assimilate what that information tells us and translate it into consistent conduct. As we assimilate the responses of the environment, they are organically incorporated into our comprehension and, consequently, influence the way we act.

We don't understand this as requiring us to be weak or cowardly, or to be managed by others. On the contrary, when we assimilate the message of our environment, we know enough and have enough self-mastery not to act out of reaction, to take the reins of our life firmly in hand and assume responsibility for our conduct.

Let us then ground our mysticism in daily life. Let us participate effectually by assimilating life's answers to our actions, beginning with the ones in our immediate environment. Once we have achieved this nucleus of participation, there will be a wave of consciousness capable of expanding. Thus we will retrieve from the world of dreams the idea of attaining a broader and more inclusive state of consciousness.

We have to plant the seed before it can take root. Let us plant our mysticism in daily reality, so that it may assimilate the nutrients from our relationship with life. Everyday life—the life we are familiar with—is the only concrete means we have to develop our

state of consciousness—and consequently our mysticism—to participate with humankind, and to unite with God. This is why we say that there is no spiritual life separate from life, there is only Life.

PRIORITIES

Message of 2003

The situation of the world today causes us difficulties. We have to make a great effort to handle our immediate problems, we are upset about the suffering of many human beings, and we are filled with anxiety about possible future events. Over time, and without our realizing it, the pressure of these feelings and the stress under which we live establish the pattern of our priorities.

The great influence that the pattern of our priorities currently has over our behavior perpetuates the problems that we suffer.

It becomes essential that we reorder our priorities. The very possibility that we can do so assures us that we will be able to overcome our conflicts.

How is it possible for us to reorder our priorities?

Let us first recognize the positive aspect of our situation.

If we realize that there are conflicts, it is because we are conscious enough to be able to identify them. Also, we have the possibility to overcome this situation because the solution to these conflicts in most cases depends on us—us as human beings.

Therefore, let us assume responsibility for what happens to us. Let us discern the course of action that brought us to this point and work to overcome the problems currently afflicting us—problems that are afflicting not only ourselves personally but society as a whole.

To understand where we are, let us begin by asking ourselves what attitudes and behaviors led to this situation in the first place.

What do we see? On one hand, we claim to have high values: responsibility, solidarity and love. On the other, we often ignore these values. Our relationship with those we love is not always friendly, and our relationship with those we consider strangers or guilty of our suffering is clearly conflictive, when not openly aggressive. Those we formerly said we loved are now often like strangers to us. We are constantly exposed to examples of individual, collective and institutional behavior that give credence to these views.

From the spiritual perspective, what can we expect of our mysticism if we continue with these contradictions and attitudes? Would our spiritual practices be mysticism?

Mysticism, as described by our teaching, presupposes a consistency between values and conduct, as well as clear and congruent objectives.

The road we travel from here on will depend much more on the priorities we choose and what we do about them than on what we profess to believe and the values we say we hold. It is not with attitudes that we are going to resolve conflicts but through upright conduct, oriented by objectives that stem from our vocation of unfolding and participation with all human beings.

Therefore, let us observe our words, actions and achievements. Let us seek the thread that unites our personal successes and conflicts, values and objectives with the social and global problems we are currently experiencing. This quest will lead us to ask

ourselves what really matters to us, what we really want; in other words, *what our priority is*.

Our priorities are behind what we do and they direct what we do. Our purposes derive from our priorities and from our priorities derive our accomplishments. This is the basic motivation that has marked the course—promising or not—that we have followed up to now and which we will pursue from now on.

How can we be sure to keep clear the course of unfolding we claim to have chosen? We can be sure by learning how to evaluate our course, especially through the kinds of priorities that move us to act.

What we call priorities are our personal objectives that precede in time or value others we could have.

How can we generate the priorities that constitute our purposes and orient our unfolding?

From the moment we are born we absorb from our environment the objectives that direct our actions. Simultaneously, we generate our own objectives according to the tendencies that prevail in us. This is how our life takes a direction that is not necessarily the one we want it to take and which, in fact, often does not satisfy our need for meaning.

Life by itself does not express its meaning in a way that matters to us: its very reason for being. It is up to us to give meaning to our existence.

Whatever the meaning we give to our life theoretically, what gives the real meaning that prevails in everything we do or attempt to achieve are the priorities we keep alive over time. These priorities also determine the objective toward which we are heading. In consequence, they reveal the real and concrete meaning we give to our life.

Among our priorities we can distinguish the elementary ones, which are basically spontaneous, and the chosen ones, which are based particularly on discernment and will.

Elementary priorities derive from the instinct to preserve our species.

The blind instinct to survive generates our automatic reactions of defense and attack, of competition and the struggle to prevail. It also generates the way we defy uncertainty and death by obtaining wealth or power or both.

But the impulse to prevail is not always in keeping with the purpose of collaborating. The impulse to win at any cost is not in keeping with the purpose of participating. The impulse to please ourselves is not in keeping with the purpose of acting selflessly for the good of others.

Nevertheless, we find it difficult to distinguish the impulses that move us. The same capacity for reasoning that gives us discernment turns against us when we use it to argue based on the desires that respond to elementary impulses that are oriented in the opposite direction to the expansion of our consciousness.

Our chosen priorities derive from the consciousness of being that we have developed and from the willpower that permits us to apply those priorities. The kinds of priorities we really choose depend on the level of our development and the extent of our

willpower. The broader our consciousness is, the higher is the priority to continue developing that consciousness. The stronger our willpower is, the more likely it is that we will be able to keep this priority alive.

The task of unfolding consists basically in separating and channeling the impulses generated by elementary priorities so that there will be room to develop our consciousness along with the willpower to make our free will effective. We take our first steps in that task when we choose an objective that transcends mere survival and then reorder our priorities to match that objective.

But we need something more than an objective and a theoretical reordering of our priorities if our life is going to be directed toward that objective. We cannot erase the imprint of the species from our unconscious. Elementary priorities generate impulses that remain on a par with our intention to find transcendent values and, in many cases, go against our effort to unfold. As with any member of our species, there is a force in us that drives us to prevail and to avoid personal suffering. We do not choose that impulse, it is intrinsic to our nature. But if we give it free rein, if we do not discern and guide it, it is unlikely we will advance much further than the natural consciousness of the species.

Let us sincerely ask ourselves in what measure we give a positive meaning to our elementary priorities and in what measure they control us. It is important for us to determine this, since our mastery over the impulses that these elementary priorities generate in us and the direction we give to that energy also establishes the nature of our relationships—with persons, resources, possibilities, or ethical and spiritual values.

In short, what determines the quality and real meaning we give our life is our fundamental priority and the willpower we apply to fulfilling it.

Let us not therefore confuse discourses with reality. By saying to others—and telling ourselves—how elevated is the ideal that moves us, we could actually be unaware of the gap between our ideal priorities and the real priorities that we apply every day. Therefore, besides paying attention to the great yearnings we say we have, let us focus on our will to make that ideal our priority, not only theoretically or abstractly but also vitally, in our thoughts and actions. And let us be in decisive command of our process of unfolding.

Let us put discourses aside—not only the ones we reserve for others but also those we make to ourselves. Let us examine our real and present priorities, recognize where we are headed and reorder our priorities as needed.

To help ourselves we need not a sophisticated method, but only simplicity and honesty in our evaluations.

Upon awakening in the morning and considering the day ahead of us, let us draw open the curtain of the commitments we will need to fulfill and look at what is behind them. Let us make clear to ourselves what we are seeking behind the unforeseen circumstances we will face, what is our primary objective behind our worries and occupations. Let us make this the content of our meditations.

During the day, let us ask ourselves what priorities we are responding to. Are we seeking gratification? Are we feeling sorry for ourselves? Are we struggling to impose ourselves? Above all, do we ask ourselves these questions when we make decisions,

when we get into discussions or arguments, when we have to decide whether we will honor our commitments or not? And let us be honest in our answer. Let us not be afraid of uncovering the personal ambition in our agenda, if that is what we detect. Let us observe our priorities so that we can adjust our course and make sure that our life retains a transcendent meaning.

Before going to sleep at night, let us go over what we have done, let us meditate on the priority that motivated our decisions and responses to the demands of the day. Let us check that priority against the ideal we profess to have.

Let us remember every day that what we habitually seek reveals our basic priority, and that this priority is where we are directing ourselves—this is the true meaning we are giving our life.

Of course, these reflections are not enough to attain what we propose to achieve, but we should not let that discourage us. On the contrary, our growing capacity to recognize our defense mechanisms and reactions reveals that we are advancing. If there is always a distance between the point at which we are now and the horizon that moves us to expand our consciousness, that is natural. Our present plenitude is nourished by the certainty that we are doing all we can to expand our consciousness without deceiving ourselves, however hard it is to accommodate our conduct to our chosen priorities.

If everyone's priority were the good of all, it would be easy to achieve a coexistence that would motivate us to remain conscious of the big picture of life and make evident the transcendent objective that gives meaning to human life. It would also be easy to end hunger, war, violence and mediocrity.

For the good of all to become one day everyone's priority, let us begin by making it our priority and acting that way decisively and with strong willpower. This will also root our mysticism in reality and, upon that basis, we will open the way to divine union. When our mysticism takes on reality, our meditations become vital and we revitalize our love for delving ever more deeply into what we now think we know. When our mysticism takes on reality we see that it is within our reach to find and apply solutions to our problems and the problems of humankind.

Let us discern the priorities that mark the road we are opening in our consciousness; let us reorder them according to the inner clarity that we are achieving step by step, and let us concentrate our will on retaining the meaning that the basic need of unfolding reveals to us. Today this unfolding urges us to unite with all human beings. We arrive at the threshold of the divine through the human field of action.

If we keep our fundamental priority alive, and if our willpower is consistent with that priority, we can be sure that we are giving our life transcendent meaning. And we can be sure that we will make the possibility of loving and living in peace and harmony with all human beings a reality. This achievement will open up to us the way to divine union.

PARTICIPATION, LOVE AND EMPATHY

Message of 2004

Traditionally speaking, when we refer to mysticism we mean the experience of union with God. From this point of view, mysticism represents the aim of what we are used to calling spiritual life.

Looked at from a broader context, the concept of mysticism includes something else: it is the process leading us to union with God. This is how we come to associate spiritual life with a mystical path.

Using this approach, we can identify two main aspects in mysticism: mystical experiences and the mystical process.

A temporary—usually brief—perception of a sphere of consciousness that is greater than our habitual state is what we mean when we say we have had a mystical experience.

Although strictly speaking a mystical experience is union with the divine, in practice mystical experiences cover a broad range of events, from moments of emotional exaltation to profound experiences of contemplation. Since the latter require intense and prolonged practice in a regimen of ascetic practices tailored for that purpose—a regimen that few of us can or want to follow—we are commonly content to associate our mysticism with the emotions we feel through spiritual writings, readings, pictures, chants or ceremonies related to subjects we consider spiritual. These emotional moments stimulate our devotion and reverence for the divine. However, we need to be careful not to transform them into the ultimate aim of our mysticism, not to confuse stimulus with objective.

Since these mystical experiences are subjective in nature, and since we tend to think that they are what mysticism is, we tend to place mysticism in opposition to our cognitive processes. This leads us to the extreme of believing that what can be explained, reasoned and pondered is alien to mysticism.

Nevertheless, it is because of those very cognitive processes that we can understand our relationship with what is around us, develop empathy, and open ourselves to more inclusive spheres of consciousness. Mysticism therefore is not alien to these processes; on the contrary, it gives them meaning and orientation.

The progressive expansion of our state of consciousness, which unites us to increasingly broader spheres of existence, takes place through what we call a mystical process.

The mystical process encompasses all the aspects of human potential; among these, the cognitive capacities that we develop and the experiences that we live are indispensable for the evolution of our self-awareness and sense of participation.

A process implies changes in our state; in mysticism, it implies changes in our self-awareness. In the first years of life, we develop our self-awareness up to a certain point through interaction with our environment. Over time, we consolidate this self-awareness with the feeling of belonging. Then the pace of this development begins notably to diminish. In order to reverse this situation, the need for meaning has to appear in our consciousness, and this need must be imperative. Then it also becomes

imperative for us to have the means at our disposal that will allow us to satisfy that need.

From this perspective, mysticism can be considered an ascetical-mystical process. Asceticism refers to the means that foster the development of our state of consciousness; mysticism refers to the nature of those means and how we express in our lives what we attain through them.

The mystical asceticism of Cafh is based on its Doctrine, and is made up of the Asceticism of Renouncement and the Mysticism of the Heart.

We give the name Asceticism of Renouncement to the systematic work we do in making our mental processes, emotions, behavior, and decisions more conscious. This work is based on our sense of participation.

We give the name Mysticism of the Heart to the idea of our destiny of union with God, the intention that motivates our awareness of participation, and the attitude and conduct that express that awareness. Our conscious intention shows us the road to real love; our conscious attitude and conduct are steps along that road.

In our habitual state of consciousness, the way we spontaneously identify with the sphere of our immediate interaction sets the level of our state of consciousness. Our self-awareness derives from that sphere, as well as the place we assign for ourselves in our perception of the world. Our sense of identity and belonging are confined to the sphere with which we are identified, independent of whatever theories we might hold about human beings and the world.

We can say that we have advanced in the mystical process when, after deliberately and systematically working on ourselves and our relationships, we are able to reach a state of consciousness that is habitually more expansive than the state we would have achieved without that work. If we continue with the same work, and progressively achieve more expansiveness in our habitual state of consciousness, that will be a new advancement in the mystical process.

However, it is not easy for us to produce such change. Though it is evident that life is change, it is hard for us to accept the changes that seem to jeopardize our conception of what we are and the place we occupy in the world. We may even reject these very changes of the mystical process, since they make us reconsider what we think and feel about ourselves.

It is also difficult for us to accept changes that affect our identification with our surroundings. Although some identification can mean we have empathy with a particular milieu, it can also promote a defensive, protective attitude of our sense of identity and belonging, and of our own conceptions of that milieu. When we completely identify with a milieu, everything else seems alien to us.

In order to overcome our unconscious defenses and promote our unfolding, the Asceticism of Renouncement offers us a method of life as an instrument of unfolding.

Our method of life arises from the consciousness that we participate with all humankind. We discern our needs and options on the basis of the present-day circumstances of not only the group we feel part of but also the situation that the majority of human beings live today. Not only that, but our moral and spiritual

decision-making goes beyond the needs of today to include our commitment to care for the environment and future generations.

The guidelines of the Mysticism of the Heart—intention and attitude, which are linked to participation, love and empathy—orient our method of life. The more inclusive and less selfish our intention is, the greater is our participation. The more open and receptive our attitude is, the deeper and more effective will be the unfolding of our love and empathy.

Our method of life includes exercises, practices and a guide for conduct.

Exercises include, for example, prayer, meditation, and introspection.

Prayer keeps us aware that we have a place in the universal context. It fosters in us respect for all human beings as well as reverence for the divine mystery and its expressions in life.

Meditation gives us mental mastery and teaches us to orient our thoughts and feelings according to the meaning we give our life.

Introspection develops our capacity for self-analysis and evaluation of our conduct.

Practices include, for example, retreats and periodic reunions.

Retreats give us a time for reflection at some distance from our habitual milieu, which makes it easier for us to understand our life and the course it is taking.

Periodic reunions fulfill basically three functions: learning, practice, and the harmonizing of relationships.

As learning, they are a forum in which we share concepts that expand our vision of life and ourselves.

As practice, the periodic reunions have two aspects: to carry out exercises that teach us to master and orient our thoughts and feelings, and to find ways in our daily lives to apply the concepts we have learned.

The relational aspect of the reunions is based on the fact that the individual mystical process is inseparable from the mystical process of the group. From this perspective, the purpose of the periodic reunions is to move forward the mystical process of the group as a group. Its immediate objective is harmony in the group. The relationship among those in the reunion shows the level of the state of consciousness of each of its participants. The commitment of each member of the group to harmonize the relationship with everyone in the group also shows that individual's commitment to his or her own unfolding. The fruits attained in the relationship with the group show the individual fruit obtained by the ascetic exercises that the members practice. The purpose of teamwork in the groups of Cafh is the spiritual unfolding of the group as a group and the contribution to society of the spiritual benefits generated by the group.

From the point of view of participation, the periodic reunions are particularly beneficial when they are inclusive; that is, when the group is formed of members from different milieus and, especially, when the group gathers with the intention of loving, understanding, participating and learning from each other.

A guide for conduct assigns a meaning to our conduct. We can be irreproachable in our actions according to conventional standards and yet selfish and antagonistic in our relationships. As a practice, our guide for conduct shows us two concrete and

immediate steps that, if we were to take them, would powerfully move our mystical process forward: to work as a team and to harmonize our relationships not only in our groups in the periodic reunions but in all the groups of our milieu: family, work, social and spiritual group.

The Asceticism of Renouncement and the Mysticism of the Heart give us the guidelines for the mystical asceticism of Cafh; they also give us the necessary frame of reference to become familiar with our own individual mystical process.

Let us begin by evaluating the phase we are in right now.

The simplest and most direct way to evaluate where we find ourselves in our mystical process—i.e., what our state of consciousness is—is to discern the quality of our relationships.

How can we evaluate this? Although our mystical state is subjective, we may evaluate it objectively by seeing how we express it in our milieu, including the activities we consider spiritual, such as periodic reunions, retreats, and private conferences.

The reactions that we produce in others let us know how they perceive our intention, attitude, participation, love, and empathy. In other words, they tell us how those individuals evaluate our mysticism. Not always does their evaluation match our own. If we take seriously the objective evaluation of those around us, this provides us with moderating information for our self-analysis. If we don't take it seriously, we remain in the vicious circle of judging subjectively a state that is likewise subjective: we are both judge and interested party at the same time.

For example, the way we treat the places and things we use demonstrates fairly objectively our love, participation and empathy for the milieu we live in, as much to others as to ourselves.

Following these simple guidelines, the objective evaluations we make from now on will show us the orientation of our mystical process.

In making this contrast and comparison, let us first verify whether our fundamental priority coincides with the aim we want to give our life.

Let us bring to light the basic purpose of our motivations: What moves us to act as we do, decide as we do? What occupies our time, mind, and feelings? What are we really looking for? This is how we will know what our actual fundamental priority is.

That which we seek in the successive “now” reveals the meaning—underlying our day-to-day decisions—we give to life in general and to our life in particular. The mysticism we experience and the way we understand it depends on that meaning; it is in this meaning that the daily meditation, the study of the teachings, the reunions and, in general, all the aspects of our method of life take shape.

Let us also verify whether the changes characteristic of the mystical process are taking place in us. Although this is not a linear process, in the interest of analysis let us try to imagine it as a line that begins at closed egocentrism and ends at the union of the individual consciousness with the cosmic consciousness.

In the extreme of closed egocentrism, what really matters is the life of the person in particular, how she feels and what she achieves for her own benefit. Ideas about life in general and its fabric of relationships do not greatly affect her conduct. Her self-

awareness is that of a separate, independent being who is free to act according to her ends, and with that self-awareness she places herself within the human context and seeks to unite with God.

As the individual advances toward the other extreme on this continuum, he changes his perception of his relationship with his milieu, and also his relationship with the good he can do and the nature of his responsibility and freedom.

Just as we realize that we cannot take ourselves out of the picture of life, we also understand that we cannot remove ourselves from the field of humankind, that the individual good includes the good of the whole and vice versa, that the union of an individual consciousness with the cosmic consciousness opens the way for humankind to attain this union.

By developing our empathy and sense of participation, we allow ourselves less latitude to decide and act independently. Our level of participation shows us the necessary acts and decisions that will place our own good within the good of the whole.

In the same way, our sense of responsibility develops from the extreme of rejecting every commitment to that of recognizing that we are committed by the mere fact that we exist within a whole. This awareness moves us to exchange the idea that we are free to live our life as we please for the idea that we need to confirm our existential commitment through actions and decisions that are consistent with that participation.

This mystical process shows that the idea of freedom is also in process. It shows us that the freedom human rights give us is as important as the way we make use of those rights in the light of our inevitable commitment to live in relationship. When we place individual freedom and individual rights in that context, self-analysis and self-mastery—the ascetic aspect—and the love centered in the good of all—the mystical aspect—take precedence when we decide how to exercise our rights and what use we make of our freedom.

The mystical process also teaches us that isolated mystical experiences expand our consciousness when they form an integral part of a systematic spiritual work within the framework of daily life. This expansion is measured by how these experiences influence our daily life. For example, to what extent do they broaden our points of view, dissolve our prejudices and develop our empathy? And not only that, how do we express those advancements concretely in our relationships? If our mystical experiences do not broaden the milieu we identify with, they will not develop our sense of participation and we will not express that development in our conduct. No matter how gratifying those experiences might be, they won't move our unfolding forward. On the contrary, they would give us the illusion that we were living mysticism when, in reality, our thoughts and feelings and, particularly, our attitudes and actions, would be showing the contrary.

What role does renouncement fulfill in the mystical process?

According to the Doctrine of Cafh, mysticism is not only based on renouncement, it takes it for granted.

Every step we take forward means leaving the last step behind us. But our underlying fear of the uncertainty of life makes us cling to the supports that promise security. When we feel a strong enough basis of support to think we are secure, we identify so

strongly with that security that we feel it as a sort of dispossession—a renouncement—when we advance another step in our unfolding.

But if our imperative is to unfold, we give an expansive meaning to our renouncement; it ceases to be dispossession and becomes liberation.

We renounce because to live is to renounce; in situations that evolve we cannot stop the flow of life or crystallize our attainments and conquests.

We renounce so that the tools provided us by the Asceticism of Renouncement keep us open to learn about ourselves and our relationship with life and the world. If we did not renounce, using those tools would reinforce the state we are in now, and yet we would think that we were advancing by the mere fact that we were using those tools.

We renounce so as to free ourselves, to love without attachment, to participate without asking for anything, to develop a self-awareness that is not constrained to pre-determined limits, to expand our consciousness toward union with God, in whatever ways the divine may be revealed in us.

FIRST MESSAGE OF THE GMK III

LOVE OF UNFOLDING

Message of 2005

Let us, with renewed energy, fall in love with our path each day.

Let us fall in love with its potential. Let us liberate this potential through our committed work, so that it may be transformed into a source of good for all souls. In this way, every instant that we live will be illuminated with our reason for being: to unfold spiritually so that we may unite with the Divine Mother through spiritual and integral participation with all beings.

Let us acknowledge the gift of having a reason for being that transcends the limits of a seemingly separate existence. Let us acknowledge the grace of having a reason for being that motivates us to participate with all that exists. Let us follow our vocational calling fervently, the calling that invites us to unite with each other through inclusion. Let us clear in this way the path that leads to the expansion of our soul and to union with the Divine Mother.

Let us deepen into the mystical meaning of our path. Let us learn to recognize the Divine in all that exists, expanding and internalizing the meaning of renouncement, freedom, and love.

We rely on the strength of love that has allowed us to discover the special vocation of renouncement. Let us not be satisfied with the study and understanding of mystical paths opened up by other souls. Let each of us open up those paths. When we concretize our noble intentions in effective actions, we incorporate the teaching into our daily life and explore in depth what we have learned.

In this sense our task needs to be realistic, with attention to detail. It needs to be unceasing, patient and, above all, honest. Let us take each moment of our life and place it along the route that leads to the Divine Mother. If we are conscious of events as they happen, we perceive each experience as an opportunity to respond to the moment ever more satisfactorily and fully. Let us be meticulous in recognizing the divine in all that exists, without exclusions, and let us do it with healthy enthusiasm. Let us nourish our soul permanently with an unconditional love for the spiritual work each of us is fulfilling. When we refocus ourselves and find our place in relation to our reason for being—patiently, without being concerned about how many times we have to try—our intention and repeated effort gain strength, until the Divine Mother's name accompanies our every heartbeat. And, above all, let us cultivate an honest attitude toward ourselves. Let us get over the fear of discovering ourselves as we really are. Let us get over the fear of uncovering the nature of the most intimate feelings we harbor in our hearts and the responses we give to each circumstance in life. The real possibility for unfolding is built upon this honest attitude.

Let us place in context our freedom to exercise our free will, especially when it leads us to transcend limits to expand our possibilities. Let us become conscious of the existence of those limits. Let us recognize the extent of our dependence on circumstances, on our

pursuit of appreciation, on our need for a preferential position or for obtaining privileges. When we choose, let us be fully conscious of what we are choosing. Let us be conscious that we are free to choose, especially that we can choose to give ourselves.

When we transform our love into a love that is continuously more stable, noble and expansive, we are living the love of renouncement that makes us feel fulfilled by the simple act of giving ourselves, since the strength of love is in the one who loves. When we discover that force and allow ourselves to be guided by it, we orient all our potential toward the fulfillment of the spiritual work upon earth and even beyond.

Let us make renouncement the mainstay of our whole life.

Renouncement becomes the guiding principle of our acts when we give it first priority in our life. Let us treasure the gift of having a vocation of unfolding which gives meaning to all we do; let us value our life and what we do with it. Let us learn to set aside systematically everything that does not help us unfold. We will in this way discover new facets in the values we work with; we will understand reality from another perspective, from a broader state of consciousness. When we speak of love, let us make an effort to practice a simple and committed love. When we speak of offering, let us remember the meaning of our vows. When we speak of compassion, let us remember that it is by broadening our consciousness that we open up a path to a more just and harmonious society. When we speak of freedom, let us keep in mind that emotional independence from circumstances makes us able to glimpse a reality that is free from the veils that have been created by the influence of the personal world we inhabit. Let us not dwell on trivialities that erode and consume our time and energy. Let us aspire to create, build and concretize in our life the ideas we believe in. When our heart beats with the rhythm of life, taking and leaving, just as renouncement asks of us, we are responding to the call of union with the Divine Mother.

Let us foster spiritual unfolding, the common denominator that unites us.

The strength of our offering lies beyond words, translated into palpable acts that allow us to be factors of unfolding. It is more productive to create a better world than to merely dream of it. So let us make a positive influence on the future through precursory actions. In daily life we have infinite possibilities for creating the inner and outer world we yearn for. Some actions that generate new possibilities lead to immediate results and others give results later on, but they all collaborate to form the human being we wish to become. Let us work with perseverance, which is the precursor of fortitude and discernment. Let us accept unpleasant times along with the pleasant ones, as the precursory attitude to the resilience that will allow us to consistently maintain the same disposition to work and offer ourselves. Let us listen and validate, in order to generate the best conditions for good teamwork. Let us be open to diversity, the precursory attitude to friendship and peace.

Let us always look forward, strongly rooted in our reason for being. Let us give primary value to the path we have chosen. For, although as individuals we are a mere instant in the whole of the human process, each decision we make has an impact that transcends us. In this way, our consistent and harmonious lives will become magnets that attract souls and reveal the greatness of our spiritual ideal.