
" *THE GARDENER OF LOVE* "



There are beautiful surprises, in life, and such was the case for me, on August 6. At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, the Foire Brayonne festival chairman Gaëtan Lévesque asked Martin Perreault to sing a song composed for me by Réginald Blaquière. Following is a translation.

*Gentle Gardener, Gardener of Love.
There's come to us like an iron hand in a velvet glove,
Whom the people will love.*

*With an iron hand he will clear the brush and pull the weeds;
he will prepare his garden and sow.*

*With a velvet glove he will till the soil,
he will work his well-prepared garden;
new flowers he will put in.*

*An iron hand in a velvet glove:
he will cultivate aggressively
and keep the good soil.
For the Brayons he will pray.*

*Of Jesus his brother he talks,
Softly he leads us in prayer;
In his wagon he parades
The thousand blossoms he has grown.*

A VISION OF FAITH

I welcome and accept these words as an expression of Mr. Blaquière's friendship, solidarity, and loyalty to me. He expresses the fundamental aspect of my mission - that of being "the gardener of Love". This mission I share with all the artists, all the lovers, all the fathers and mothers, all pastoral teams, all pastoral agents, and all the priests. What a beautiful mission! A mission of love. And what a beautiful garden, full of promise for the future! But regarding the iron hand and velvet glove, I think the poet used this image to convey the idea of a bishop's firm guidance and kindness.

APPRECIATION FOR THE ARTISTS

To express my appreciation to the artists and those close to them I would like to translate a beautiful text composed by Cardinal Louis-Albert Vachon in honour of Félix Leclerc [The late French Canadian poet laureate and singer] and all artists. I heartily concur with these words.

GOD created them,

the poets, the songwriters, the guitarists and others, the privileged of
the beautiful arts, artists of every race, colour, and group.
He created for them the world with its vast expanse,
with its secrets, too, which are revealed but to those who listen long
and who are docile to the call of truth and freedom and the crispness found in the high country.

Filled with wonder at seeing them, GOD exclaimed:

I am proud of you. You are my voice. You are my messengers.
Let beauty burst forth, I've sown it broadcast on the earth.
Let your music intoxicate them all, let it make places and things sing out.
Let simple hearts sing, and let we all drink at the clear waters of life!

GOD knows that at the very core of his feelings,

the artist senses the resistance and suffers its wounds.
In him are found untold resources of intuition.
At the edge of his consciousness lie powers of clarity which are never depleted.

The poet, the songwriter, the guitarist always search their hearts.
They know how to find the right chord, the chord of love
which plays on every scale, the scale of life, an incitement,
a commitment which is mission.

It is with deep emotion that I offer you a second song, *La montagne*, which Mr. Blaquièrè gave me the day following Félix Leclerc's death; it speaks of the greatness of the human being, of his solitude also as well as the fullness of being with one's Creator:

Leave and come with me to the mountain. Come, let your heart speak out.

Come, come with me to the mountain. There you will find your Saviour.

From darkening clouds you search for brightness. You are alone in your world.

On your raft, alone at sea, you no longer believe in prayer.

Leave and come with me to the mountain. Come, let your heart speak out.

Come, come with me to the mountain. There you will find your Saviour.

For you life, an endless tunnel, a life of fear, with no tomorrow.

Rainy days devoid of sun: What is life worth on days like this?

Leave and come with me to the mountain. Come, let your heart speak out.

Come, come with me to the mountain. There you will find your Saviour.

Open your door to the Creator Master. Listen to the song of your rippling brook.

Leave your people, your world, and come with me, come to your happiness.

Leave and come with me to the mountain. Come, let your heart speak out.

Come, come with me to the mountain. There you will find your Saviour.

This morning, August 6, the assembled community at the Foire Brayonne Mass, loudly applauded our brother poet.

+ François Thibodeau

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Bishop of Edmundston

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