

on The Duty of Delight

osophy was profoundly shaped by a Chester-
r and downtrodden, those people who lacked
dence that comes with it. As the following
also show, she had a beautifully developed
seeing spiritual significance in apparently
They are to be found in The Duty of De-
othy Day.

ble here, it is a prayer. Jean Goldstone, our
llevue. A great soul. Very Jewish, very sad
o little (as he thought). While Ruth Collins
ters at 36 East First rebuilt from the shell
y day to be on hand to check contractors,
liveries, etc. A most faithful friend to the
Mary, and Joseph, be with him in his last
or him. I had just finished praying this be-
n at the farm, when Mike Sullivan walked
ose in a glass jar for the statue of Therese.
is spending her heaven doing good upon
very close to "the dear departed," as the

to call upon. I carry on converse with
erton and Belloc. "You were a bad influ-
drinking and good cheer as you did, for
; your example meant a broken home and
ense suffering and the frustration of noble
emphasized too much the pleasure prin-
ple trifle with life forces and become jaded
e severity of the sex code in the New Tes-
nd the counter emphasis on the marriage
vision is compared, if lived up to, would
ys of body and soul and make known the
sed and purified by abstinence. "The best
of things is to give them up to the Lord."
asure if not isolated from mind and spirit
called "the best of things.")

The best of things; the taste of heaven on earth, marriage,
wherein all joys are purified in the most natural and supernatural
fashion, in the "nature of things," pleasure and pain going together.
I've so often thought of the "dark night of the senses" which moth-
ers go through, bearing children, nursing and rearing them.

Ida Görres on the History of the Family

— Chesterton's philosophy of life is based on notion that the family pre-
cedes the State and makes the State possible. Ida Friederike Görres
is fascinated by the same subject. In the following two passages taken
from her book *Broken Lights: Diaries and Letters* (Burns & Oates
Ltd.: London, 1964), translated by Barbara Waldstein-Wartenber,
Countess Görres draws attention to the relationship between the family
and the clan.

A talk with NN. Stimulating but most unsatisfactory—time was
short and neither of us would let the other finish what he wanted
to say! He was full of reproaches for the Church for failing to ac-
knowledge the family as a special state of spirituality, grumbling at
the lack of "a proper theology of marriage," and that issue should
still be considered as the fundamental purpose of marriage, etc. Still
harping away on the same old strings—but we must leave it at that,
as long as we've got no better answers to offer.

But do these critics never stop to think that it was impossible
to consider marriage at all except within the family, that this would
have been an impossible abstraction?—outside the reality which was
the clan. And that "the family" always meant the *whole clan*, never
just the couple. The clan was anything but a centre of spiritual life!

Nowadays the accent is reversed. These days the consuming,
dominating "ideal" is no longer even the State (except the totalitar-
ian versions), or society, but a mass-suggestion of the primacy of
"sexual fulfilment." The Christian must find a new way of breaking
free from this collective spell of sex.

* * *

Getting back to that conversation about the family. If there's anything in A.R.'s astrological-historical theory, then one could say that throughout the whole Pisces era¹, right into this last period, the family is an Aries² phenomenon: vehicle of blood, power, authority, fame, possessions, expansion. So closely identified with all these things that it certainly offered no room for spirituality! Which accounts for the demonstrative stand of almost all the typical saints of this era against this idol, starting with Felicitas and Perpetua—indeed all the martyrs, particularly the virgins, for whom severing from the *gens* meant a decisive act—then Radegunde, Francis, Elizabeth, down to Nicholas of Flüe and Jane Frances de Chantal. This struggle, this revolt was lurid, melodramatic, spectacular, and despite all efforts can never be convincingly interpreted as edifying. Which is why monasticism appeared at first less as “sacrifice” than as achievement and victory—liberty from the power of blood, a strange, new, disconcerting freedom! Yet the clan still remained so exemplary, even for its “deserters,” that the religious orders have been based upon its model: the religious family, brothers under a father, sisters under a mother—not members of an organization, soldiers under a general—Ignatius was the first to establish this new type of religion without a family.

Only much later, hard on the transition period, did the Church begin to uphold and protect “the family”: for this impoverished relic of a once great power now suddenly emerged as the last bulwark against the new leviathan which replaced the Aries deities by a new idol: the State. All the same, what the Church now defends and protects is *nowhere* the family in the old clan sense. This recent “small” family is in a way just as much an “inner” phenomenon, hinging on interior things, as the clan was extrovert, turning outwards for fulfillment. The “Pisces family” is only now beginning to crystallize, it had barely existed before, at any rate there was no general awareness of it—in reality it may have been there for some time.

The romantic love of the nineteenth and our own half of the twentieth century was the protest against the out-worn clan concept of marriage: the cry for individualism *à deux*. But, rootless and unsheltered, this, too, is overtaxed and dying of disillusionment. It

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Blaise of Flüe and Jane Frances de Chantal.
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and more as victory—liberty from the power of blood,
winning freedom! Yet the clan still remained
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in mind: the religious family, brothers under a
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St. Ignatius was the first to establish this new
family.

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twentieth century protest against the out-worn clan con-
cept of individualism *à deux*. But, rootless and
ungrounded and dying of disillusionment. It

cannot be maintained by itself, as the divorce figures in their mil-
lions go to prove. These "love matches" stand more than ever in
need of the shelter and security to be found only in something be-
yond themselves, they must be linked anew to something greater,
supported by the whole.

1 Pisces era: roughly the Christian era, up to 1950.

2 Aries era: roughly from the Bronze Age era to the threshold of Christianity
—the Homeric and saga age, age of gods, demigods and heroes.

Graham Greene on the Moral Significance of Violence

— In October 1940, Graham Greene wrote an essay entitled "At Home"
(*Collected Essays*, London, 1969). In this piece, he discusses the Nazi
bombing of London and reflects on the political tensions of the 1930's:

One gets used to anything: that is what one hears on many lips
these days (October 1940), though everybody, I suppose, remembers
the sense of shock he felt at the first bombed house he saw. I think
of one in Woburn Square neatly sliced in half. With its sideways ex-
posure it looked like a Swiss chalet: there were a pair of skiing sticks
hanging in the attic, and in another room a grand piano cocked one
leg over the abyss. The combination of music and skiing made one
think of the Sanger family and Constant Nymphs dying patheti-
cally of private sorrow to popular applause. In the bathroom the
geyser looked odd and twisted seen from the wrong side, and the
kitchen impossibly crowded with furniture until one realized one
had been given a kind of mouse-eye view from behind the stove
and the dresser—all the space where people used to move about
with toast and tea-pots was out of sight. But after quite a short
time one ceased to look twice at the intimate exposure of interior
furnishings, and waking on a cement floor among strangers, one no
longer thinks what an odd life this is. "One gets used to anything."
But that, I think, is not really the explanation. There are things one
never gets used to because they don't connect: sanctity and fidelity
and the courage of human beings abandoned to free will: virtues

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