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“Giving is a vital need for those in love.”

Your talents, your personality, your opportunities... are being wasted: you are not allowed to make full use of them. Meditate well these words of a spiritual writer: 'The incense offered to God is not wasted. Our Lord is more honoured by the immolation of your talents than by the vain use of them.' (The Way, 684)

January 5

Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Let us pause here a while to understand this passage of the holy Gospel. How is it possible that we, who are nothing and worth nothing, can make an offering to God? We read in the Scriptures: "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above" [1]. Man does not even manage to discover fully the depth and beauty of the Lord's gifts. "If you knew the gift of God!" [2] Jesus exclaims to the Samaritan woman. Jesus Christ has taught us to expect everything from the Father and to seek first of all the kingdom of God and his justice, and everything else will be given to us in addition, for he knows well what we need.

In the economy of salvation our Father looks after each soul with loving care: *Each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one*

of another. It would, therefore, seem useless to be concerned about presenting to the Lord something that he has no need of. As debtors who have nothing with which to pay, our gifts would be like those of the old law that are no longer acceptable to God: *Sacrifices and oblations and holocausts for sin you have not desired: neither are they pleasing to you.*

But the Lord knows full well that giving is a vital need for those in love, and he himself points out what he desires from us. He does not care for riches, nor for the fruits or the beasts of the earth, nor for the sea or the air, because they all belong to him. He wants something intimate, which we have to give him freely: *My son, give me your heart.* Do you see? God is not satisfied with sharing. He wants it all. It's not our things he wants. It is ourselves. It is only when we give ourselves that we can offer

other gifts to our Lord. (Christ is passing by, 35)

[1] Jas 1:17

[2] John 4:10

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